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THE SECOND COMING OF THE LORD.*

BY THE EDITOR.

And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.—*Mark xiii. 26.*

UPON an occasion like the present, when about to inaugurate public New Church worship in our pleasant town, where there is already, some might suppose, quite a sufficiency of churches, it seems eminently proper that we should define our theological position, and present some of the reasons which, to our minds, seem to justify this course.

It is not, then, because we deem ourselves wiser or better than our neighbors. It is not under the prompting influence of any such exclusive, self-righteous, anti-Christian spirit, as says: "Stand by thyself—come not near to me, for I am holier than thou." It is not because we believe our Christian neighbors have embraced a faith that is carrying them straight down to perdition, or that ours is the only faith whereby men can be saved. It is not because we wish to multiply or raise higher the partition walls which already separate the disciples of Christ too widely from each other

* A Discourse delivered April 24th, 1859, on the occasion of the inauguration of public New Church worship in Orange, New Jersey.

and from the common Master. It is not because we covet the reputation of singularity, or wish to draw attention to ourselves by adopting a separate or peculiar form of worship. No. We humbly trust that we are actuated by no considerations of this sort. On the contrary, we would do something, if possible, to break down the partition walls which have too long divided and afflicted the fold of Christ. We would break them down, not by bringing all men to *think* precisely alike on all questions of theology—not by reducing their religious beliefs to an exact and unvarying uniformity—an achievement as undesirable as it is impossible—but by introducing into the church a larger and more comprehensive charity. We believe that unity, peace, harmony, and good-fellowship among Christians, are compatible with a wide diversity of belief on minor points of doctrine ; and when men's hearts shall become suffused with the love of Christ, that love will so soften and melt them together, that mere doctrinal differences on minor points will vanish almost as the vapors of the morning disappear before the rising sun.

What is the essence of the Christian religion ? What is its sum and substance as stated in the most comprehensive terms ? Is it a *belief*, merely, in this creed or that ? Is it not rather a higher and nobler and more diffusive element—a principle of *life* extending to the very core of our being, and outworking itself in all beautiful and praise-worthy deeds ? Is it not love—love to the Lord and the neighbor ? For does not the Divine Word declare, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart ; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” The meaning of this clearly is, that love to the Lord and the neighbor is the end for which the law and the prophets were given, and the sum and substance of all they teach.

But how to get into this state of supreme love to the Lord and the neighbor, is the grand question. And here arises the importance of a clear, positive, well-grounded, and well-defined belief. And it is obvious that that belief will

be the best and most helpful, which is nearest the truth ; for our actions are regulated by our beliefs.

We of the New Church have a system of theological belief, which, to us, is exceedingly precious ;—a system of belief, which is at once rational, consistent, coherent, harmonious and beautiful—resting upon the Lord Jesus Christ as the Chief Corner Stone, in harmony with the Sacred Scripture, with man's highest reason, with true science, and with all that is known of the laws of our mental and moral constitution. Our belief is one which solves a great number of difficulties that have hitherto perplexed the wisest and best minds in Christendom ; which sheds a flood of light upon many interesting but embarrassing problems ; which reconciles all parts of Scripture with each other, and with right reason ; and which at the same time leads directly to a life of practical piety and usefulness. We come, therefore, to proclaim this belief publicly on the Sabbath, in the hope, that, if there be in this community any whose religious wants are not fully met by the popular theology, they may find here that which will enlighten, interest and profit them. And let this be the test ever to be applied to the doctrines here taught—their obvious *practical* tendency. If their tendency be not to elevate the affections, to purify the heart and life, to bring us into closer communion and nearer the moral likeness of our Father in the heavens, to make us better husbands, fathers, wives, mothers, citizens and neighbors, then set it down as certain that they cannot be from God out of heaven—cannot be true. “Ye shall know them by their fruits : a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” And if we cannot expect to gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, no more can we expect that the innate tendency of doctrines which are themselves false, will be to produce pure, noble, and righteous lives.

We believe in a New Dispensation of Christianity—a new unfolding of truth from the Word of the Lord—*i. e.* an unfolding of higher, purer and more rational truth—the truth

of the spiritual sense of the Word. We believe that this Dispensation commenced a hundred years ago, when the Word as to its spiritual sense was laid open, and all the great facts and laws of the spiritual world were at the same time revealed. And we believe that this New Dispensation of Christianity is the very thing pointed at in the language of our text, understood in its true spiritual sense.

And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. In this divine language is contained, as we believe, a prophecy of the New Dispensation which we preach—a prophecy of a second but *spiritual* advent of the Divine Saviour to his Church—i. e. the advent of spiritual truth unfolded from the Word of the Lord, or a more powerful and glorious exhibition of the divine Wisdom and Love in the salvation of men. Let us examine briefly the grounds of this belief.

And we remark, first, that it is no valid objection to this view, that it differs widely from the prevailing opinion of the Christian Church in regard to the nature of the Second Advent. It is not strange that Christians should have misunderstood and misinterpreted this prophecy. Indeed, it is just what we might have expected. For what divine prophecy was ever fully understood or correctly interpreted *before* its fulfillment? See how it was in relation to the prophecies concerning the Lord's first advent. The Jewish Church expected a Messiah, for their Scriptures foretold his coming. But how differently were those Hebrew prophecies fulfilled, from what the Jews expected! They had interpreted them literally—agreeable to their own gross and carnal conceptions. Therefore, *to Jewish minds*, their prophets announced the appearance of a great Prince and Warrior, who would deliver the Jews from the yoke of Roman bondage and lead them on to victory over all other nations. Their bondage to the Romans was the only bondage of which they thought; and deliverance from that was the only deliverance for which they sighed. Of their far more grievous bondage to sin and Satan, they thought nothing and they knew nothing. So far, there-

fore, were the Jews from rightly apprehending the meaning of their own Sacred Scriptures concerning Messiah's advent—so little did they comprehend the *spirit* of their Scriptures, and so closely did they adhere to the *letter*, that when He came whose advent was foretold, his character and avowed purpose were so different from what they expected, that they regarded and treated Him as an impostor—condemned and crucified Him as a malefactor.

Judging, then, from the past—seeing how the Jewish Church misunderstood the prophecies concerning Messiah's first advent—is it not reasonable to expect that those relating to his second appearing would be equally misunderstood by Christians? Is it not reasonable to expect that his second coming would be in *some* form different from the general expectation of the Christian Church?—*so* different, indeed, that He would not at first be generally recognized, even by those who bear his name and are looking for his appearing?

And yet it would seem as if the Saviour's repeated caution in the chapters which foretell his second coming, ought to be sufficient to have prevented Christians from expecting an outward and literal fulfillment of this prophecy. For He cautions us to "watch" lest we be *deceived*. And the reason for this caution is given: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch, that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Now what possible need were there of any such caution as this, if the prophecy concerning Christ's second coming were intended to have a literal fulfilment? In that case there were no possible opportunity for imposture; and therefore no one *could* have been deceived. And *if* the prophecy were to be fulfilled according to the letter, surely no one could be deceived when the event actually takes place; and therefore we can see no need of *watching* lest we be deceived.

To every reflecting mind, therefore, the Lord's caution to take heed lest we be *deceived* in regard to his second advent, must be conclusive evidence that this advent is not to be in

a form addressed to the *outward* but to the *inward* sense—to the eye of the *mind*; for in respect to things addressed to the understanding, men are liable to be deceived—are liable to accept falsehood for truth, or a spurious for a genuine revelation. Hence the ground and reason of the command to “watch” and “take heed.”

In obedience, therefore, to the spirit of this divine injunction, let us proceed to unfold the true spiritual import of the language of our text: and let us inquire first, *Who* is the Son of Man here mentioned? This is the very inquiry once made of the Saviour himself; and his answer was: “Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you . . . While ye have the light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” Here the divine Saviour himself tells us who the Son of Man is. He is **THE LIGHT**—the light by which all men are to walk,—*i. e.* the light by which they are to *live*—the light by which they are to be guided and governed in the regulation of their thoughts, dispositions, feelings and conduct. And this light is spiritual. It is the light of divine truth. Hence the Saviour on another occasion announces himself as “the Light of the world,” and “the Light of Life;” for He is the Light of the moral world—the Illuminator of all minds; and all who truly live, must live in and by this Light. Hence we read in the first chapter of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . In him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . This was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” It is also declared of this Word, Logos, or Light, that “He was in the world, and the world knew Him not;”—that “He became flesh and dwelt among men,” &c.;—showing that He, whose first advent occurred more than 1800 years ago, was himself the very embodiment of the Divine Wisdom or Word.

And so where the final judgment is spoken of:—sometimes it is said that the Son of Man will execute judgment,

and sometimes that his Word, or the Truth will judge men. Thus on one occasion the Saviour says : "For judgment *I* am come into this world, that they who see not might see ; and that they who see, might be made blind." And in another place, He declares, "The *Word* that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." And the Psalmist says : "Thy Word is Truth ;" and again he saith : "For He cometh to judge the earth ; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." The natural and necessary inference from all this is, that the expression *Son of Man* in our text is used to denote the Lord in respect to the Divine Wisdom, Truth, or Word, which is Himself. Indeed we have his own declaration that He is **THE TRUTH** as well as **THE LIGHT**. He says : "I am the Way, *the Truth*, and the Life."

But there is a passage in the Revelation still more conclusive on this subject. It is where the coming of Christ in judgment is spoken of, and reads thus : "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and He that sat on him is faithful and true, and in righteousness doth He judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written which no man knew but He himself ; and He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood ; and his name is called **THE WORD OF GOD**."

Now it is worthy of notice, that, in every passage where the Lord's second advent is spoken of, except this in the Revelation, He is called *the Son of Man*, which denotes the Word, or Divine Truth. And in this passage, He whom the Revelator beheld in vision sitting upon a white horse and followed by the armies of heaven—upon whose head were many crowns, and who hath a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords—is called **THE WORD OF GOD**.

Here then we have a clew to the difficulties which have hitherto so greatly embarrassed this question concerning the Lord's second appearing, and a key also to their solution. The error of Christians has been precisely that of the Jews. Forgetting that the Lord's words are spirit and life, and

that He spake all things in parables, Christians have interpreted the prophecy concerning his second appearing in the same literal manner that the Jews interpreted those concerning his first advent. Accordingly they have looked for an outward and personal instead of an inward and spiritual coming of Christ. They have looked for the fulfillment of the prophecy according to the letter, and not according to the spirit. They have expected his coming would be in a form and manner agreeable to men's carnal conceptions,—visible to the outward sense—and not in the manifestation of the inner glories of the Divine Word—not in the demonstration of the spirit of truth, and the all-subduing power of divine love, addressed to the inner senses or perceptions of the soul. This has been the error of the church in all ages since the fall of man—that of mistaking the mere sensuous appearances of truth for the truth itself, and so abiding in the letter, which the apostle says “killeth,” instead of ascending to the spirit which “giveth life.” And so will it ever be in the degree that men remain in a low, natural, unregenerate state. As the same apostle again says: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

The testimony of the Bible, then, is clear and conclusive as to the true meaning of the prophecy concerning the Lord's second appearing. It is not to be an outward, visible, personal appearing, according to the literal import of the prophecy. No. It is to be an inward and spiritual coming—a more glorious and powerful manifestation of the divine wisdom and love to the understanding and hearts of men. It is to be a coming—a new and second coming of the Word of God—for this is what HIS NAME is called whose advent is foretold. And what can be meant by this new and second coming of the Word, but the coming to human minds of the interior and divine glories of the Word? What, but the opening and revealing of the truths of the spiritual sense hitherto concealed? This spiritual sense of the Word is to

that of the letter what the soul is to the body. It is its vital principle—its quickening and life-giving element. Take from the Bible its spiritual sense, or what is the same, deny to it the existence of any sense beyond that of the letter, and you reduce it to the level of any common book; you rob it of its true and genuine inspiration; you deprive it of its living and divine soul; you make it no longer the Word of God all warm and breathing with His own spirit and life, but a bundle of ancient documents merely, for the most part dull, dry, lifeless and unpractical.

“And then shall ye *see* the Son of Man coming in the clouds.” There is spiritual and natural seeing which correspond like soul and body. To see naturally, is to exercise the natural sense of vision—to discern natural objects. And to see spiritually, is to perceive by the eye of the mind—to discern, that is, to understand, spiritual things. Thus, to *see* a truth, is to understand that truth; to *see* the spiritual sense of the Word, is to understand that sense; to *see* one’s own evils, is to understand or to have a conscious perception of the nature and character of his evils; to *see* the way to heaven, is to understand that way—to understand the kind of life that leads to heaven; to *see* God, is to understand the divine character and attributes; and those who are most *like* God in their character, dispositions and feelings—in the purity of their motives and their disinterested love of others are able to understand Him best. They understand Him by virtue of his own spirit—pure, loving, and unselfish—dwelling in their hearts. We understand another person, or *see* him spiritually, by virtue of what there is in us that is like that other. If his character and his experiences are similar to our own, then we can truly see him. But if our thoughts, feelings and dispositions are altogether unlike his, how can we understand him? How see him as he really is? And so we can understand or interpret the character of God, only in the degree that we have His spirit, and are images and likenesses of Him. Therefore it is written, “Blessed are the pure in

heart, for they shall see God." God is love itself; and his love is pure and unselfish. It is the love of doing good without thought of recompense. It is the love of others out of itself. And in the degree that we receive and exercise this love—in the degree that we come into a state to experience a positive delight in doing good, or in rendering ourselves in the highest degree useful to our neighbor or to society, in that degree we dwell in God and God in us. We understand Him, therefore, by virtue of what there is of his own pure and loving spirit in us. We *see* Him through the medium of that disinterested love—that purity of heart—caused by the presence and indwelling of his own blessed spirit.

But the Son of Man, agreeable to the prophecy, will be seen coming *in the clouds*—in one of the evangelists it is *the clouds of heaven*. What is the true Scripture import of this language?

If by the promised second coming of Christ is to be understood the unfolding of higher and purer truth from the Word of the Lord—the coming of its true spiritual sense to the understandings and hearts of men—then it is plain that the *clouds* here mentioned cannot be understood in the literal sense. The clouds spoken of in the prophecy cannot refer to the watery particles that float in our atmosphere, but must be used in a symbolic sense. It is a beautiful and expressive symbol, too; and its spiritual or symbolic meaning has never been wholly lost sight of in the Church of Christ. How often do men, in familiar discourse, speak of a subject not well understood, as *cloudy*, or enveloped in *clouds*. And when the truth breaks in upon the mind, or the subject becomes clear and intelligible, they say the clouds are *dissipated*, or that *light* has broken through the clouds.

As the natural clouds render natural objects, and particularly the heavenly luminaries, obscure, therefore they are a beautiful and appropriate symbol by which to represent moral obscurity, or that which causes obscurity in spiritual and heavenly things. And what is this but that external

and carnal state of the human mind which leads men to accept appearances for realities, and so to abide in the mere sensuous appearances of truth in the letter of the Word? Thus the truths of the literal sense of the Word, as received by the external or carnal mind, that is, as understood by merely natural men, are as *clouds*; for they obscure or hide from such minds the transcendent glory of the more interior truths—the truths of the spiritual sense. Sometimes this *cloud* in the letter of the Word is extremely thin—a mere transparent haze, through which the light of heaven flows with little or no obstruction; as in such texts as these: “As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also unto them likewise.” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” “Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” This is my commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you.” “But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.”

Then there are other passages whose literal sense is of such a nature that scarce a beam of spiritual light can pass through them to the natural mind;—and these constitute a very large portion of the Word. Take, for example, Psalms xviii. 6–16; or Ezekiel x. 8–16; or the Revelation, chapters vi., ix. and xii. What thick, dark *clouds* are here! How little of heavenly wisdom do those who know not the spiritual sense, derive from passages like these! The light of the upper spheres does not so easily shine through such clouds as are here.

Then go back one hundred years, to the commencement of the New Dispensation, and see what was then the state of the Christian Church! See how terribly the minds even of the teachers of Christianity were then beclouded on all

spiritual subjects ! See what darkness, and doubt, and disagreement, and endless confusion prevailed even among learned Doctors of Divinity ! See what impenetrable clouds overhung the spiritual world and the life after death ! See how all the loveliest features of Christianity were marred or obscured, and even the benignant face of our Father in heaven clothed with angry frowns ! See what endless and bitter controversies had arisen among Christians in regard to almost every doctrine of our religion—as the doctrines concerning the Lord, the Sacred Scripture, the Resurrection and the life after death, the state of infants in the other world, Regeneration, and a future Retribution. And thus was fulfilled, in their spiritual sense, those prophetic declarations which speak of “wars and rumors of wars,” of “pestilences and earthquakes in divers places,” of brethren “betraying one another and hating one another”—that would precede the second advent of the Lord. All minds were beclouded—terribly beclouded—on nearly every subject connected with Christian theology ; for all rested in the mere letter of the Word, and therefore all were “under the cloud.” Yes: Would we see how indispensable to the welfare and progress of humanity was this coming of the Word in its spirit and power, we should not look at the Christian Church as it is now—though many and thick clouds lower around it still. But we should go back to the period prior to the memorable year 1757, and look at its character as it stands recorded on the page of history. “That celestial principle of love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor, which shone so conspicuously in the early days of Christianity, making her converts of one heart and one mind, and binding them all together in the bonds of a beautiful brotherhood—that principle had died out from the heart of the Church. And there was little or nothing of *vital* faith in the divinity of the Lord, the divinity of the Word, or in a life after death. The Sacred Page had been misunderstood and falsified throughout, and spiritual darkness brooded like a death-damp over the mind of Christen-

dom. And as to the sterling principles of good and truth, which had once filled the firmament of the Church—gemmed her moral sky like stars—these were no longer seen, no longer acknowledged, no longer looked to or thought of by the great body of the Church. As fixed and guiding principles of life, they were no more :—they had fallen from their heavenly places. And thus was fulfilled in their spiritual sense, and in relation to the Church—most fully and perfectly fulfilled—this prophetic declaration : “The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven.”

“But at this juncture, amid the general darkness that enveloped the Christian world, amid the dense clouds of ignorance, error, doubt, and denial—all generated by the inordinate love of self and the world—which had extinguished in human minds all the bright luminaries of heaven, amid these dark encompassing clouds, a glorious light breaks forth to rejoice and save a sinking world. A new day dawns on groping humanity. A new sun appears above the moral horizon. From underneath the clouds of the letter, out from the living soul of Scripture, out from that world where angels dwell long clouded and obscured, the Spiritual Sun pours kindling beams on a benighted Church. And *thus* the Lord of life appears in glory on the clouds.”* Agreeable to the prophetic declaration in our text, “And then shall ye see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, with power and great glory.”

And although the Church is not yet arrayed in her bridal robes—not yet all glorious in her apparel—far from it—still it is apparent to all eyes that a new Morning has burst upon the world. The light of the New Dispensation, like that of a newly risen sun, is gleaming all around us. Mark how its piercing beams have penetrated the dark corners of the earth—how they have pervaded with their light and life every sphere of thought and action ! Mark how the human intellect everywhere, under the quickening influence of the now unsealed Word, has burst its old swathing bands, and

* Barrett's Golden Reed.

leaped forth with a manly vigor ! How science, literature, philosophy, art, industry, politics, morals, and may I not add religion, have already begun to feel the influences of the Second Coming ! Mark how all the forms of human thought which prevailed a hundred years ago, are changed, or rapidly changing ! How old religious dogmas, old systems of philosophy, old theories of politics, old forms of government, old modes of education, old industrial processes, old errors on all subjects, are being brought to judgment ! And how, one by one, they are beginning to retire before the waxing power of truth, as creatures of the night retreat before the rising day ! How manifestly is this divine declaration, "Behold I make *all* things new," receiving its fulfillment before the eyes of this generation ! The light of the New Jerusalem, which is the light of the Lord in His second appearing, has made itself so conspicuous in the events of the last century, that even the most jaundiced eyes—those who are offended at the bare mention of a New Dispensation, and who are ready to pierce with the tongue of slander its precious verities—can hardly fail to recognize it. Agreeable to the divine prediction, "And every eye shall see Him, even they who pierced Him."

But the things to which I have here alluded are comparatively external ; and therefore they illustrate but feebly the power and glory of the Second Advent. The peculiar triumphs of this New Dispensation are to be achieved not in the outward world of matter, nor merely in an improved condition of civil or industrial affairs, but in the inner world of mind—in an improved state of the understanding and the heart. When the true spiritual sense of God's Word comes to us—that is, comes to be clearly perceived and understood—it searches the soul as with a thousand candles of the Lord ; it opens up all the hidden depths of iniquity within us ; it discloses the endless deceits and artifices and sinuosities of the unregenerate heart ; it shows us our need of an almighty Saviour, and brings that Saviour, O, how near ! It shows us plainly of the Father, for it reveals Him in

the Son, and exhibits His matchless and unspeakable love ; it withdraws the veil that has so long hung over the spiritual world, and discloses the real nature of heaven and of hell ; it reveals to us clearly the great end for which we were created, and shows us beyond mistake the way in which that end is to be secured ; it resolves the doubts of honest doubters in regard to the divinity and inspiration of the Scriptures, reconciles all its parts with each other and with right reason, shows the perfect agreement between nature and revelation, or between science and religion, and satisfies the severest demands of the intellect in regard to the Trinity, the Atonement, the Resurrection, and other doctrines, which, as based upon the mere letter of the Word, and as commonly held and taught by Christians, are known to be embarrassed with so great difficulties.—Truly does the spiritual sense of the Word come to the rational understanding “ with power and great glory.”

And yet it is not *here* that its peculiar power and glory are most conspicuous ;—not in its ability to clarify the intellect and satisfy the demands of the reason, but in its renovating influence upon the heart ; in its power to subdue the natural man ; to soften the temper ; to refine the feelings ; to purify the motives ; to elevate the affections ; to weaken the power of evil within us ; to mould our inner man into somewhat of the likeness of our Father in the heavens ; and so to build us up a true and living temple fit for the residence of God’s Holy Spirit.

Under this New Dispensation, which commenced a century ago, is to be built up, as we believe, a New Christian Church on earth, which, in God’s own good time will be like a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid ;—a church which will be filled with all sweet and gentle charities, conspicuous for all noble and philanthropic deeds, crowned with all attractive and heavenly graces, “ beautiful as a bride adorned for her husband.” Such a Church, we believe, is to be built up, not chiefly by a visible and imposing array of new ordinances, new rituals, a new priesthood, and new

church-organizations, but rather by the infusion of a new and heavenlier spirit into the heart and life of humanity. This New Church, shadowed forth in the Apocalypse under the image of the New Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven, is to be a universal and truly catholic church, because its spirit is the all-embracing spirit of the Divine Word. Exalting charity above faith—life above mere doctrine—it can, and does, embrace within its pale all of whatsoever color, clime, or creed, who have in their hearts any genuine love of the Lord and the neighbor. Its platform is broad as the foundations of the angelic heaven. The divinity of the Lord, the divinity of the Word, and the necessity of a life according to the commandments, are its three great fundamentals, and the only doctrines which it recognizes as *essential* to Christian fellowship. And while it teaches the highest spiritual truths, and has no sympathy with falsities of any kind, it nevertheless respects every one's honest convictions, and is mild and tolerant towards all forms of belief, conceding the possibility of salvation in them all. Love to the Lord and to the neighbor being its own essential spirit, it excludes from its communion none who exhibit this spirit. It excludes none, save those, who, through evils of life, exclude themselves from the Lord's blessed kingdom of love and peace.

Such is the Church in which we believe. Such the Church whose doctrines we preach. Such the Church, which, in its fuller unfoldings and more mature state, is to illustrate pre-eminently the power and glory of the Second Advent. Such the Church, whose foundations are all manner of precious stones ;—the Church, whose morning dawn it is our high privilege to witness, and whose rising noon a remote posterity will rejoice in ;—the Church, whose central light and life and inspiration is the Lord Jesus Christ, and which will itself realize the fulfillment of the prophecy, "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself ; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."

DESCENSUS AVERNO.

A MYSTICISM.

A youth in the land of Immortals,
Engirdled with love like a zone,
In the sunshine and glory of morning,
Went dreamily wandering alone

Far down to the borders of Aidenn,
Far down to the crystalline walls,
O'er which, to the chaos beneath them,
God's light like a cataract falls.

In-drawn, he was fixedly pondering,
With an ardor akin to strife,
On the questions which have no answers,
And the awful riddle of life.

With a feeling of dread to have wandered
From the centre of heaven so far,
That the sun of its holy meridian
Had dwindled almost to a star,

He gazed on the verdurous tissues
That glittered and grew at his feet,
When he saw a most wonderful serpent
Glide out of its hidden retreat ;

A rainbow of serpentine colors,
Gold, silver, and crimson and green,
So like to the beautiful herbage
That its motions were scarcely seen.

It glided away like a spirit,
Like a thought which we cannot retain,
And the youth of its splendor enamored,
Sought after it over the plain.

He lost it 'mid grasses and blossoms,
That swayed in the sighing breeze—
And he came to a granite fountain
In the shadow of odorous trees ;

A fount with a sculptured basin
Of Paradise-water there,
As placid as if it were frozen,
As lucid as if it were air.

Forgetting the ethereal nectars
To innermost angels given,
He would scoop in his shell-tinct fingers
This marginal water of heaven,

When a dove with fluttering pinions
Alit on his outstretched arm,
With the plaintive wail of a mother
Who would shield her child from harm.

In the reckless thought of the moment,
He brushed the bright warning away,
Ah ! the bird had espied how the serpent
Encoiled in the water lay !

What a change in the world within him !
What a change in the world without !
The old path he could find no longer
However he turned about.

He saw naught but an iron portal
That led to a desolate moor,
A region of stone-heaps and shadows—
And he passed through the iron door

W. H. H.

“In the spiritual world there are actually ways which extend towards every society of heaven, and towards every society of hell ; and every one sees his way as from himself. The reason of this is, that there are ways there for every love, each opening that which leads to its associates ; and no one sees any other ways than those of his own love.”—*Divine Providence*, n. 60.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE WITH DIVINE FORESIGHT.

BY REV. WOODBURY M. FERNALD.

“Thou only knowest,
Thou, whose broad eye the future and the past
Joins to the present, making one of three
To mortal thought : of two eternities
Amazing Lord !”

It is doubtless very difficult for our finite faculties to realize how such a truth as the infinite Divine foresight can possibly exist. It seems almost too much for even Deity himself. That some *Generals* of the universe should be pre-
visioned to the Deity—that the planetary systems, for instance, and the nature of man, and his fall and restoration, with other things of a like general character, should be known and seen by the great Creator from all past eternity, is a truth we can very readily admit. We can seem to comprehend how such a thing could be. But that all the minutiae—the infinite and everlasting complication of events in all worlds—the smallest particulars, with all the thoughts, motives, and actions of man, spirit, and angel, should be thus seen and scrutinized—what an overwhelming contemplation ! And yet if we will stop upon the very threshold, and consider what the generals are *without* the particulars—that they can in fact only be made up of each several particular, we may infer that one can be foreseen, on the same principle as the other. How is a general seen ? How does God see *anything* before it comes to pass ? This question answered, the whole is answered ; for the difference between one such thing and many is only that which is involved in the infinity of the contemplation. The *infinity* of the subject may perplex us, but the principle not at all.

Let us then proceed to narrow down the contemplation to the nature and proportions of a man. We know that man is the image of God, created from Him, and spiritual like Him. And now the astounding fact presents itself that

man foresees, with wonderful accuracy, an event before its existence in the world of nature. How often is it the case ! It is proved by prophecy, by dream, by presentiment, by actual spiritual sight, either in sleep or wakefulness, in numberless instances. And it is a truth of the most wonderful and interesting nature. *How is it*—we have asked ourselves many a time—that the future can be foreseen ? We can understand how the *past* can be seen, and this even by the spiritual vision of one who has never known the history of it—never heard of the events which are now for the first time discovered, and which are viewed and read distinctly by a clairvoyant power, on the records of the by-gones. There is a very appreciable philosophy for this. The past has existed. It has therefore *made its impress on the substances of the world*, either material or spiritual, or both ; either in human souls, or in the general sphere of spiritual existence from them ; and it is so indelibly engraven that it can be read there by the eye of the soul as from the page of a book. Let none think that the actions of the past are not preserved, and stratified, as it were, in the earth of human experiences. Witness the truths in the previous articles on Memory. Most astonishing is the reality—most thorough and substantial the philosophy which so interprets it.

But how can the *future* be seen ?—that which has not yet existed—which no human soul has felt or sensed in any way—which depends upon the concurrence of a thousand wills, and purposes formed and annulled, and re-formed and re-annulled, and ten thousand contingencies. How can such a thing be seen even for a day, much less a year, or many years in advance ? And yet we know that it is seen, and with the most amazing particularity, even in the recognition of accidental circumstances. How is it ?

Let us observe, then, in the first place, that it is *not true* that these things never have existed. They *have* existed in some sense, as before observed, in the general substances of the spiritual world, and in the Deity Himself. The Infinite em-

braces from eternity all the finite, which are only so many variations and complications of possible existence comprehended in the Divine Essences but not yet ultimated into nature. There is, therefore, a general pre-existence to all things. And in the spiritual world, which is all *from* the Deity—more especially that part of it which is nearest to earth, there is a more definite, formal and active theatre of efforts, which are the causes of much that we see here in natural existence. In one sense it may be said *all* that we see here ; for everything exists in spirit before it takes on natural ultimates. Now it is by seeing the *causes* of things—which exist in substantial essences in the pre-existent world, that things in this world are sometimes foreseen with such fatal precision. These causes form an infinite network of most infallible connection, and of course, by the Deity, can be *all* comprehended in his Infinite Mind. But *some portion* of that prescience can be imparted to created beings. An angel, standing above the human plane, can see much more than we can, and predict to a much greater extent the forecoming history. He may do this by taking into his view a greater number of causes. And in proportion to the really spiritual capacity of a human being, whether by natural refinement, by culture, or by states induced by normal or abnormal processes, is he so much nearer the spiritual world, and can see so much more of the forthcoming natural. Hence it so frequently happens that the most surprising things are pre-visioned and pre-intimated to mortals here below, which are fulfilled with the greatest accuracy. There is no chance, no accident. All is absolute, connected, and causative existence ; and to the Omniscient, who can take in all, it is not so much foresight as insight ; not so much foreknowledge as eternal verity. And yet not by arbitrary predestination on His part, but by certain knowledge of the movements of created freedom.

Thus it is that we are frequently *forewarned* of dangers, which warnings are intended for our safety, if we would heed them ; and that they are most accurately foreseen is

proved sometimes from the apparently *accidental* nature of the occurrences so previsioned. Take for instance the following case reported by Mrs. Crowe, in her "Night Side of Nature." It is related from the best authority as communicated to herself, and is given as an instance of the "inexorable fatality which brought about the fulfillment of the dream."

"Mrs. K——, a lady of family and fortune in Yorkshire said to her son one morning on descending to breakfast : ' Henry, what are you going to do to-day ? '

" ' I am going to hunt,' replied the young man.

" ' I am very glad of it,' she answered. ' I should not like you to go shooting, for I dreamed last night that you did so, and were shot.' The son answered, gaily, that he would take care not to be shot, and the hunting party rode away ; but in the middle of the day, they returned, not having found any sport. Mr. B——, a visitor in the house, then proposed that they should go out with their guns, and try to find some woodcocks. ' I will go with you,' returned the young man, ' but I must not shoot, to-day, myself ; for my mother dreamed last night I was shot ; and although it is but a dream, she would be uneasy.'

"They went, Mr. B—— with his gun, and Mr. K—— without. But shortly afterward the beloved son was brought home dead : a charge from the gun of his companion had struck him in the eye, entered his brain, and killed him on the spot."

How purely accidental seems the occurrence here related, and how many were the chances, humanly speaking, that it should not so have happened ! Going back into all the connections of the generations past, or even only for a few days, how many separate wills, and motives, and contingencies, had to concur for the production of this incident ! The day might not have been fair, which would have prevented the excursion altogether. Or that particular visitor who carried the fatal gun might not have made his appearance. How many causes might have detained him ! Or,

having been present, he might have been more careful. Ten thousand things may be imagined in defeat of such an occurrence, but *it was to be!*—and it is a truth overwhelming to think of. Not, I say, predestinated, in the common understanding of that term, but made certain by the working of human agencies, and hence foreseen.

But on the other hand, when such warnings are obeyed and the casualty prevented, it alike proves the fore-knowledge, not of the event, but of the impending danger or nearness of it, which is equally out of ordinary human sight, and in the pre-existent future. Many instances might be related, but our limits forbid. The life of the great Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, “was saved by the Governor of Dover refusing to allow him to embark for the continent with his friends. The vessel was lost, with all on board; and the Governor confessed to him, that he had detained him in consequence of an injunction he had received in a dream to do so.*”

“Seeing in dreams,” says Ennemoser, “is a self-illuminating of things, places and times;” “for relations of time and space form no obstruction to the dreamer; things near and far are alike seen in the mirror of the soul, according to the connection in which they stand to each other; and as the future is but an unfolding of the present, as the present is of the past, one being necessarily involved in the other, it is no more difficult for the untrammelled spirit to see what is to happen, than what has already happened.†”

“Sir Humphrey Davy dreamed one night that he was in Italy, where he had fallen ill. The room in which he seemed to lie struck him in a very peculiar manner, and he particularly noticed all the details of the furniture, etc., remarking in his dream how unlike anything English they were. In his dream he appeared to be carefully nursed by a young girl, whose fair and delicate features were imprinted upon his memory. After some years Davy travelled in Italy, and

* Night Side of Nature, p. 79.

† p. 49.

being taken ill there, actually found himself in the very room of which he had dreamed, attended by the very same young woman whose features had made such a deep impression upon his mind."

A most remarkable instance of this foreseeing power was related to me by a personal friend but a short time since. An acquaintance of his, a few years ago, dreamed one night of being in a very difficult position, in a street in New York, with a coach, and in the rain, when he came to a certain locality, and found himself, in the midst of other troubles, in great *pecuniary* need. He was relieved by the presentation of some silver money, among which was noticed a number of pieces of very singular coin, the like of which he had never seen before, supposed to be foreign, and the value of which he could not tell. But what should be his surprise to find himself, several years after, in the very same difficulty, in the same locality, and actually relieved by money containing a number of the *new three-cent pièces*, which had just made their appearance, and which were an exact *fac simile* of the coin he saw in his dream! Then, too, for the first time since its occurrence, flashed the whole dream into his mind. The dream occurred before any such coin had been struck or ordered in the country, and before any one, so far as he knew, had conceived of the device.

Such facts seem almost to show that our whole experience in this world, and indeed, upon the same principle, forever, is woven into a fatal pre-existence. It is, so far as certainty is concerned, but in perfect consistency with the utmost practical freedom.

But the most singular instance, I think, that I have ever heard of, of such pre-vision, or pre-intimation of the future, is related in the Memoir of the celebrated Lavater, prefixed to his work on Physiognomy. Professor Sulzer, a young man of his acquaintance, had one day fallen into unusual gloom and depression, which he could in no wise account for, and which was continued for several hours with the most dismal apprehensions. All his affairs, so far as he

knew, were going on as well as usual, and what the cause of the foreboding was, could not possibly be divined. Yet the *distinct impression* was, that his *future wife* was in danger of some terrible accident. The Doctor was but twenty-two years old, and had as yet formed no alliance with any one who most distantly promised to come into that relationship. He had not even seen the lady whom he had been encouraged to *think* of in that connection. And it was *ten years* from that time before he entered into the marriage relation. The circumstance had almost become obliterated from his mind. Yet one day it came to his recollection, and was made the subject of conversation between him and his wife. And by referring to dates, it was found that precisely the day which had overshadowed the Doctor with such fearful apprehensions, his beloved companion, then a little girl but ten years of age, experienced a violent fall, which came very near causing her death.

Wonderful—wonderful such truth is ! Innumerable such facts might be adduced. The connection in the latter case was undoubtedly from a very near spiritual relationship, and perhaps affected or aided by the angels who were the mutual guardians of both the parties.

And now is it any more wonderful that God the Infinite should see *all* occurrences, or have in some way a knowledge of them, before they transpire in the natural or spiritual world ? Whence all the *rills* of foresight but from the infinite Fountain ? And if one thread of the infinite warp and woof of destiny can be foreseen by men, surely He who filleth immensity with His presence can comprehend all breadth, all length, and the whole infinite connection.

And, be it observed, the infinite *eye* of God, the same as his infinite power, or love, involves a spiritual faculty in its own ineffable organism. God is infinite Man. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear ? He that formed the eye, shall he not see ?" (*Psalms* xciv. 9.) And these infinite things in the Deity do not act without their proper mediums, any more than man sees without the aid of light. The whole spiritual world is full of light from its own Sun, and it is by

this light that God sees into the minds of angels, and also of wicked spirits. If, therefore, we cannot comprehend the infinity of the subject, we can the *rationale*; and inasmuch as man the creature foresees, we have only to transfer the mediumistic connections of his creatureship, in an infinite amplitude to the Creator, to conceive how He can see, not only by Himself, but by angels and spirits from Him, which is the same thing, and from eternity to eternity inspect the myriads of thoughts, feelings and actions of all his creatures, and every position and circumstance into which they may come! It all results from the germinal and infolded Essence of all things from the very first, and from the fact that God is all in all in a most necessary connection.

Mighty and overwhelming as the truth is to all finite faculties, yet it is from such a truth that the very best of consolation is derived for poor and helpless humanity. If God did not foresee and foreknow, how could He *provide* for everything? If it were possible that anything, ever so small, could start up in his dominions without his previous knowledge of it, then a greater thing may, and still a greater. And where shall limits be set? And in such a contingency, what certainty is there of absolute and abundant provision? Things, therefore, are not only *provided* but *previded*; and through all eternity, which with the Infinite is an ever present now, they are arranged in the most perfect order, because *of* order, and *from* order: that is to say, not arbitrarily or artificially, but essentially and necessarily, as flowing out of the Divine Nature Itself. What man perverts to disorder is provided with its proper limits, checks, and regulations.

Such is the truth as it pertains to man's whole existence. It is only thus that the Divine Providence is rendered perfect. But it is seen to be of the most essential importance to the *regeneration* of man. There are many progressions and periods in the regenerate life, from old states to new ones, both in the understanding and the will. It must be, therefore, by a continual moderation of man's free-will throughout the whole process. "Such progressions and

derivations," says Swedenborg, "are perpetual with the man who is regenerated, from his infancy even to the last of his life in the world, and also afterwards, even to eternity; and yet he can never be so regenerated, as that in any measure he may be said to be perfect; for there are things innumerable, yea, indefinite in number, which are to be regenerated, as well in the rational as in the natural, and every one of them has shoots infinite in number, that is, progressions and derivations towards interiors and towards exteriors. Man is altogether ignorant of this, but the Lord is acquainted with all and single things, and provides every moment; if he were to intermit his providence for the smallest instant of time, all the progressions would be disturbed; for what is prior respects what follows in continual series, and produces serieses of consequences to eternity; hence it is evident that the divine foresight and providence is in everything, even the most singular; and unless this were the case, or if it were only universal, the human race would perish.—(A. C. 5122.)

"How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them they are more in number than the sand; when I awake I am still with Thee."—(*Psalm cxxxix*, 17, 18.)

DOCTRINE CONFORMABLE TO LIFE.

"It is the spirit of man which thinks and wills; and therefore what a man thinks in his spirit in the world, he does after his departure out of the world when he becomes a spirit. In the spiritual world into which every man comes after death, it is not asked what has been your faith, or what your doctrine, but what has been your life? Thus the inquiry is concerning the nature and quality of the life; for it is known that such as any one's life is, such is his faith and such his doctrine; because the life forms to itself doctrine, and forms to itself faith."—*Swedenborg's Divine Providence*, n. 101.

LETTER TO REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER ON
THE DIVINE TRINITY.

NUMBER I.

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER :

Dear Sir:—In addressing to you a few thoughts upon a lofty and momentous theme, I trust you will forgive me for adopting a form which might seem to indicate a closer external intimacy between us than really exists. I will, however, confess to a strong internal drawing towards you—to a sense of a certain spiritual proximity, which may not be particularly flattering to you, but which is none the less real or pleasant to me. I have seldom listened to a sermon by you, that did not awaken within me holier thoughts, and enkindle better feelings, purer desires, and nobler purposes. I have seldom read an article from your pen, from which I did not draw some rational entertainment, intellectual stimulus, or spiritual nutriment—frequently all these in happy combination. Your thoughts seem oftentimes my own, but always dressed in a garb richer by far than my poor brain could furnish. It is, therefore, in obedience to a strong internal prompting, and because the epistolary style of address seems to bring you nearer to me, that this style is adopted on the present occasion.

If you have read the June No. of the *Swedenborgian*, which was duly mailed to your address, you will have seen how cordially I accept, and how heartily I commend nearly all your sermon on “Understanding God,” published in the March 31st issue of the *Independent*. With a single but important exception, which I am now about to notice, that sermon contained what, to me, seemed a lucid and masterly presentation of the truth upon one of the loftiest and most momentous themes which the human mind can contemplate. As to the vastness of the subject—as to the impossibility of fully comprehending or completely measuring the Infinite

with our finite capacities—as to the means, or subjective condition, necessary to a right understanding of God—as to the *practical* test to be applied to whatever view of Him is adopted—as to what constitutes the essential and true greatness of the Divine Being, His disinterested and all embracing love—as to the importance of believing in and worshiping a *personal* God, and that God in human form, and the utter impossibility of conceiving of any being whatsoever “which has not a personality”—as to the supreme and absolute divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the importance of believing in and worshiping Him as the manifested Jehovah, “the Way, the Life, the Alpha, the Omega, the First, the Last”—as to the views upon each and all of these subjects as set forth in your sermon, I have not a word of objection to offer. I accept them cordially as the true Bible views. They are the views, too, which Swedenborg taught with great clearness and amplitude a hundred years ago, and which are now held by all New Churchmen. So that, upon these points, *you* are doctrinally of the New Church, or *I* am orthodox—no matter which way we phrase it.

But there is one point in your sermon—and it seems to me an important one—to which I desire now to call your particular attention ; as I think your views on this point, if I rightly apprehend the meaning of your language, are contrary to the truth, contrary to reason and Scripture, and utterly inconsistent with other parts of your otherwise admirable discourse. I refer to your doctrine of the Divine Trinity as stated in the following exceptionable paragraph :

“I have only a word to add, and that is with reference to occurrences which have recently taken place. It befel me, not long ago, in writing a reply to a misapprehension of Christian brethren, to state that I had no God but Christ ; that there was an effluence rising from Christ which I was taught to call the Father ; and that there was a still more tenuous effluence which I was taught to call the Holy Spirit. So far as those men, who only lie in wait for occasion to find fault, are concerned, I care nothing ; they would find fault under any circumstances. But let me remark to you,

my people, that I understand almost literally, what I said to be the truth. It was no slip of pen, nor infelicity of language. If there was error, it was in the sense and not in the vehicle. I believe that there is God the Father; I believe that there is God the Son; and I believe that there is God the Holy Ghost. I believe that these are three beings, with separate and distinct understandings, with separate and distinct conscience, with separate and distinct will. I believe that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost have a personality so separate that, if the fact of unity had not been announced, the whole world would have been obliged to regard them as three Gods; that is, to believe in tritheism. I should believe in tritheism did I not find the simple statement in Scripture that these three personal Gods are one. I understand their three-fold personality as much as I understand the existence of three different friends. It is the unity of them that I do not understand. Aforetime, the mystery of the Trinity was, how one could be three. The emphasis was wrongly placed. The New Testament teaches three persons. In my view, the unity of these three is an unexplained but positively stated fact. I believe that it is taught in the New Testament that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are one God. In reasoning upon this, I do not suppose that they are one in the sense in which they are three, nor that they are three in the sense in which they are one."

Now, although you may agree with me, that it is possible for even polytheists to be very good men, yet you would not, I think, seriously maintain that polytheism is true, or that it is a doctrine of the Christian Scriptures. Nor do I believe you would contend that it is a matter of small consequence, whether a Christian believes in one God, or in more than one. As God is the centre of the moral universe, so the doctrine concerning Him must be regarded as a cardinal doctrine in every system of theology. All subordinate doctrines must depend on this, and must be more or less shaped and colored by it. And probably the state of every Christian worshiper, could this matter be thoroughly inquired into or opened up,—his state, I mean, as to clearness and strength of faith, and depth and tenderness of love,—would be found to depend very much on the doctrine which

he holds respecting the Object of his worship. If men believe in a proud, haughty, tyrannical God—in one who acts arbitrarily, or from caprice, and always with an eye to his own glory, as unregenerate men act—their moral and spiritual condition cannot fail to be disastrously affected by such belief. Or if they believe in a selfish, partial and vindictive God, the virus of this false belief will distill in bitter drops upon their hearts. And so, too, if they believe in more Gods than one, I should think they would find themselves often painfully bewildered and strangely confused. I should think the tendency of such belief would be to distract the mind of the worshiper, to create doubt and sad perplexity at times, and in the end to weaken if it did not overthrow his faith. And this appears to be the opinion of men more worthy to be heard on this subject than I am, and whose opportunities of observing the effects of the popular doctrine of a *tri-personal* God have been more ample than mine. One of your own denomination,—one whom I have no doubt you respect and love,—the talented and excellent Dr. Bushnell, writing of those who hold “this view of metaphysical tri-personality,” remarks that “mournful evidence will be found that a confused and painfully bewildered state is often produced by it. They are,” he continues, “practically at work, in their thoughts, to choose between the three; sometimes actually and decidedly preferring one to another; doubting how to adjust their mind in worship; uncertain, often, which of the three to obey; turning away, possibly, from one in a feeling of dread that might well be called aversion; devoting themselves to another, as the Romanist to his patron saint. This, in fact, is polytheism, and not the clear, simple love of God. There is true love in it, doubtless, but the comfort of love is not here. The mind is involved in a dismal confusion, which we cannot think of without the sincerest pity.”*

The frankness and sincerity of this—coming as it does from a distinguished minister in a denomination that pro-

* Bushnell's “God in Christ,” p. 134.

fesses to believe in a tripersonal God—no one is better able to appreciate than yourself. In its candid, courageous, and manly tone, it reminds one of yourself—sounds very much like some of your own honest, straight-forward utterances. Yet I know that even Dr. Bushnell—much as you may respect and love him—is no authority with you ; nor should he be. I only quote him to show how wiser men than I—men even in your own denomination—have thought and spoken on this great subject. But you bow—no one, indeed, bows more humbly or cheerfully—to the authority of the Bible. And upon no one point is the teaching of the Bible more indisputable, I think, than upon the strict personal unity of God. It affirms nothing with more clearness or emphasis—no, not even the *existence* of the Divine Being—than that “the Lord our God is one Lord.” And this you admit as heartily as I do. Therefore it is unnecessary to argue the point. But how to reconcile this admission with the declarations in the paragraph of your sermon above quoted, is the difficulty. It is what I confess myself utterly unable to do. It is what I do not think even you yourself, or any other mortal or immortal being, can do. For you say : “I believe that there is God the Father ; I believe that there is God the Son ; and I believe that there is God the Holy Ghost. I believe that these are three beings, with separate and distinct understandings, with separate and distinct conscience, with separate and distinct will.” You also speak in the same paragraph of “these three personal Gods,” and add, with a frankness and candor that I greatly admire, “I understand their three-fold personality as much as I understand the existence of three different friends.”

Now in other parts of your sermon you have declared your belief in a *personal* God, in contradistinction to that pantheistic view, which you justly characterize as “the theological annihilation of God as a personal being ;” and you have combatted, with even more than *your* usual force and eloquence, that prevalent notion—falsely believed to be philosophical—which conceives of God “as an effluence of

ether, diffused radiantly throughout the universe ; while you have rendered equally conspicuous the practical importance of believing in God as a Divine Person. Thus you say, truly, "that no man can form any conception of God except as a Person. We cannot know Him in such a way as that He shall manifest Himself to us, and abide with us, except as a living Person ; not even as a personage, which means something more than a person—nor in any way that sets before us an impersonal God, such as fancy imagines ; a vast diffusive power ; the essence or the life of the universe ; a spiritual vitality—and all that trashy nonsense. I hold that such a view of God as this is waste matter—mere fantastic moonshine." And, as showing the practical value which you attach to the belief in God as a Divine Person, you further remark : "I do not say that a philosophical conception of the elements of the Divine Nature is impossible ; but I do say that such a conception is not one which the soul can use ; it is not one which ever produces love. In other words, I do not believe that any man who thinks of God as an abstract being, having no resemblance to what we are, ever has a God whom he fondly loves. . . . I stand up fearlessly and say that it is not in the power of a human being to love that which does not come to Him as a person. . . . You can never have a God that you can take hold of and say, 'My Lord and my God,' or one that you can love, so long as you regard Him as a mystic something filling all space, and having no personality." And you also tell us who, according to your belief, that personal God is. He is the risen Saviour—"the glorified Jesus Christ." The best you can do is "to give God the form of the glorified Jesus Christ." "We cannot," say you, "conceive of a being without a form ; but it is not best that our imagination should have unbounded play ; therefore there is given to us the person of Jesus Christ, who is a fit form by which to conceive of God." Nor do you believe with Unitarians that Jesus Christ was merely a messenger sent from God. You believe that he was the manifested Jehovah—"God with

us." You "believe that one of the greatest elements of power is utterly cast away and lost, when Christ is regarded as a messenger *from* God, and not as God Himself, manifest in the flesh." You believe that "it is the very God that beams out from Christ, and not a secondary and transmitted impression of God through a man." Therefore you worship Him as "the Alpha, the Omega, the First, the Last," and deem it right that we should give to Christ "all that the human soul can give to any being."

Now I subscribe to these sentiments with all my heart. And I think that what you say is not only true, but truth of great practical moment, and which needs to be particularly impressed upon the minds of Christians at this time. But the force of this sound and excellent teaching seems to be greatly impaired, if not in a measure nullified, by the declarations in that part of your sermon to which I object. For consider : You first declare your belief in God as a Divine Person. You maintain that He is not, and cannot be, truly conceived of, otherwise than as a Person. You insist, too, on the *importance* of a belief in his personality ; and maintain that the Lord Jesus Christ is that Divine Person. Yet, in the exceptionable paragraph upon which I am remarking, you state it as your belief that there are "*three beings* [God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost] with separate and distinct understandings, with separate and distinct conscience, with separate and distinct will ;" and even speak of "three personal Gods" whose "three-fold personality" is as clear and distinct to your mind "as the existence of three different friends ;" and you declare, "I should believe in tritheism did I not find the simple statement in Scripture that these three personal Gods are one." Pardon me, my brother, if I say, that, according to every fair interpretation of your language in this paragraph, you *do* believe in tritheism. For, pray tell me what else than a belief in tretheism it is, to believe in three divine beings with separate and distinct understandings, conscience, and will, and whose "three-fold personality," stands out as clear

and distinct to your mental vision as the "existence of three different friends"? If you really believe in God as a Divine Person—as a Being in human form, so revealed or manifested in the person of Jesus Christ—and if at the same time you *think* of *three* Divine Persons, as distinct one from the other as any "three different friends," do you not actually believe in three Gods, whatever your lips may utter or your pen inscribe? Certainly you do not believe with your lips or your pen, but with your *mind*; and your real belief on any and every subject, is according to the thought of your understanding on that subject. So that if you *think* of three Divine Persons, it seems to me you must think of, and therefore believe in, three Gods; and your mere oral or written declaration of a belief in *one* God does not matter, nor in any way alter the case. You cannot, I think, according to any honest and intelligent use of language, declare your belief in the proper unity of God, or in *one only* Divine Person, and at the same time affirm that you believe in *three* Divine Persons with separate and distinct understandings, conscience and will, without justly exposing yourself to the charge of the most palpable self-contradiction. The two beliefs are utterly and forever irreconcilable. If we think of a *personal* God, we must either think (no matter what we *say*) of *one* Person, or of *more* Persons than one; and as we *think*, so we *believe*. And this latter thought or belief, I submit, is polytheism, however we may seek, by an ingenious use of words or phrases, to conceal the solemn fact from ourselves or others.

Does this seem to you harsh or reproachful language? I do not intend it as such. It is really the mildest and kindest that I know how to use, while seeking to make my thought on this subject, and what seems to me your own inconsistency, plain. Nor have I spoken more harshly here than some of your own denomination, when discussing the same theme. Your estimable brother whom I have already quoted (Dr. Bushnell) remarks with characteristic candor: "A very large portion of the Christian teachers, together

with the general mass of disciples, undoubtedly hold three real living persons, in the interior nature of God ; that is, three consciousnesses, wills, hearts, understandings"—precisely what I understand you to hold, according to a fair interpretation of that part of your sermon which I am criticising. "But our properly orthodox teachers and churches"—to quote further from the same excellent authority—"while professing three persons, also retain the verbal profession of one person. They suppose themselves really to hold that God is one person. And yet they most certainly do not ; they only confuse their understanding, and call their confusion faith. This, I affirm, not as speaking reproachfully, but as I suppose on the ground of sufficient evidence—partly because it cannot be otherwise, and partly because it visibly is not. No man can assert three persons, meaning three consciousnesses, wills, and understandings, and still have any intelligent meaning in his mind when he asserts that they are yet one person."

I repeat, then—not reproachfully or unkindly by any means, but with a view of leading you to serious reflection on this subject—that you *do* most certainly believe in tritheism, if, holding, as you profess, to the strict and proper personality of God, you still allow yourself to *think* of three Persons. You may *say* that you disbelieve in tritheism, but I think you deceive yourself in this. It is your *thought* on the subject (is it not?) rather than the utterance of your lips or the inscription of your pen, that determines your real belief. You believe in the true and proper divinity of Jesus Christ. You believe Him to be a Divine Person in no qualified or poetic sense ;—not merely "a messenger *from* God," but "God Himself manifest in the flesh." So you declare. Permit me now to ask, or to beg that you will ask yourself, Do you believe in any *other* Divine Person ? If so, I leave you to draw the necessary inference. Do you believe that *in* Christ dwelleth, as the Apostle assures us, "all the fulness of the Divinity," or that *out of* and distinct from Him, as you are out of and distinct from any two of your friends, there exist two other Divine Persons ? If "all the

fulness," which I understand to mean the *wholeness* or *totality* of the Godhead or Divinity, dwells in Christ, then where is the need or even the propriety of thinking of any Divinity *out of* Him, or of any other Person except Him? Yet you seem to think of two other Persons, or at least to think that there *are* two others, however feeble the conception you are able to form of them. For, near the close of your sermon, looking forward to a period when you shall have passed from this stage of being, and expressing the confident belief that you shall then behold Christ "as He is, no whit less than God," you add: "And if then likewise before my clarified vision there shall arise in equal proportions of majesty the then revealed Father and Holy Spirit, they shall not overshadow my Christ, nor take anything from the glory of His Divinity. What this final revelation of the majesty of God shall be, I am content to leave till that hour of birth which men call death." "The *then* revealed Father!" You surprise me, my brother, by this language, not less than by that quoted in the earlier part of my letter. And I am prompted to ask, Is God the Father as yet *unrevealed* to Christians? Must we wait "till that hour of birth which men call death" for the revelation of our Father in Heaven? Has not the Father graciously revealed Himself to us already? Was it not one great object of Christ's advent "to bring the Father forth to view?" Did not all that is signified by the Father—all the fulness of the Divine Love—dwell in Christ, as the soul in the body? And, seeing Him, do we not see the Father, as truly as I see you when I look upon your body, which is the natural outbirth and express image of your soul—your *real* self—in this lower sphere? How else are we to interpret the explicit declarations of the Divine Saviour Himself! "Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, then, Show us the Father? Believe me that I am in the Father, and the

Father in me." If, then, you have seen Christ—seen Him, I mean, with your mental eye—if you have seen and comprehended His blessed spirit of humility, meekness, forbearance, long-suffering, gentleness, patience, forgiveness—if you have felt the power of His redeeming love in your soul like the warmth of a summer's sun—have seen Him working mysteriously in the deep places of your heart, opening up and revealing to your conscious perception the supreme selfishness and manifold evils of your natural man, and teaching and strengthening you to overcome them—if you have thus, spiritually and truly, seen Christ, then, and in that degree, have you seen the Father. The Divine has been manifested to you in and through the Human ;—God has been revealed to you in Christ—the Father in the Son. "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*" And in no other way—sure as God's Word is true—will the Father ever be revealed or shown to men. As we advance in the regenerate life and our vision becomes clarified, we shall be able to comprehend more and more of the Divine, and thus to see more and more of the Father ; for He will continue to reveal Himself to us in richer floods of light and greater depths of tenderness and love, as we draw nearer to His moral likeness. But ever will it be—in the land of the Hereafter not less than of the Now and Here—as the successive unfoldings and revealings of the same great Central Luminary—the emanations from the face of the same Spiritual Sun, grown brighter, sweeter, and more entrancing as the smoke and vapor that surround our little earth-worlds fade away and disappear. And *thus* will the Father arise in the Hereafter—not as another *Person* "in equal proportions of majesty," but as the *self-same* Person—the same almighty and blessed Saviour manifesting Himself more plainly "before our clarified vision ;"—showing us more and more clearly the face of our heavenly Father ;—revealing, with ever increasing fulness, according to our growing receptivity, the amazing wealth of the Divine Wisdom and the sweetness of the Divine Love. So that, what you are look-

ing forward to as the "final revelation of the majesty of God," and which you think is veiled in utter darkness now, will only be a fuller revelation of God Himself to the souls of all good men—a fuller revelation of His unspeakable wisdom and matchless love—a more complete unfolding and revealing to human spirits, of those essential human attributes (pre-eminent among which stands disinterested love), which constitute the glory, and greatness, and hence "the majesty" of God. *Can* this final revelation of the Divine majesty be aught else than this, according to every rational and Scriptural view of the subject? Nay, can it be aught else, according to your own idea of the Divine character, and of the particular attribute which constitutes the distinguishing and chief element of God's greatness—unselfish love? This essential attribute of the Divine Nature stands forth conspicuously in the person and character of Christ, even to our now obscure and beclouded vision. And when we shall have passed the portals of the tomb, and been lifted into realms of loftier thought and sweeter affection—when the dust of earth-born desires, which so obscures our vision now, shall have passed away, and our souls shall have emerged into the pure and serene air of heaven, may we not reasonably expect that, to our then clarified vision, the same Divine Saviour's face will glow with a seven-fold radiance—His love and wisdom beam with a seven-fold intensity? So was it with the three favored disciples of old. When they were carried "up into an high mountain, apart," He, who appeared before to their ordinary perception as little more than common flesh and blood, was now "transfigured before them; and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." Why may we not consider this Scripture as designed to teach us the beautiful and important lesson, that the Lord Jesus is *always* transfigured before his disciples in the degree that they are brought into higher spiritual states—up into the mount of his own purity and love? The farther we advance in the regenerate life, or the higher we ascend spiritually,

so much the more resplendent shines the face of the Divine Saviour. So that, when we reach that heavenly city where there is no night, and where "they need no candle neither light of the sun," we may expect to see Him as He is seen by the angels—"His face shining as the sun, and His raiment white as the light." And if God be the Sun of the spiritual world, as the Scripture teaches, and if Christ appears to the angels all radiant with light,—“above the brightness of the sun”—as He appeared to the Apostle on his way to Damascus, then we cannot conceive of a plurality of Divine Persons, without at the same time conceiving of a plurality of heavenly Suns—a plurality of Gods.

But you believe in the tripersonality of God, because you think the Bible teaches it. "The New Testament," you say, "teaches three persons." Pardon me, my brother, for saying, that here you labor under quite a mistake. This idea was doubtless early impressed upon your mind; and it is, I presume, from the influence of that early teaching, rather than from any conviction on the subject reached by a careful personal examination, that this assertion is made. I do not mean to charge that it is made rashly or thoughtlessly—for I understand too well the force of early teaching to do that; but sure am I, that if you carefully examine the New Testament with reference to this point, you will yourself discover your mistake. You will find, as I have found, that the doctrine of three *Persons* in the Godhead, is not a doctrine of the Bible. I affirm with confidence that no such doctrine is anywhere taught in the Sacred Scripture. And if you think otherwise, I should esteem it a special favor if you would refer me to the particular passage—for I confess I have never met with it. No. This tripersonal doctrine, rely upon it, is not a doctrine explicitly taught in the Bible, but is simply an inference drawn by frail and fallible men from what is there taught. And when you consider what strange things men have understood the Bible to teach on other subjects—what false and absurd opinions have been supposed to be the legitimate and necessary inferences from its

teachings, you may, perhaps, be able to concede the possibility, that, upon this subject also the inference may not be well-founded. That the Bible teaches the existence of a Trinity in the Divine Being is fully conceded. I also am willing to concede, that, in the literal sense of the Scripture, this Trinity *appears* to be a Trinity of *Persons*—just as it sometimes *appears* from the same sense as if God actually indulged in anger, hatred, revenge and fury, and that He repents like one who has sinned, or made a mistake. But you, I cannot doubt, will agree with me when I say, that the *apparent* truth in the letter of the Bible is not always to be accepted for the *real* truth. There is much apparent truth in the volume of Nature, which we know is quite different from the real truth; and the language of men is framed to agree rather with appearances than with realities. Thus when we say that the sun *rises*, or the sun *goes down*, it is well-known that our language expresses only the *apparent* and not the *real* truth. What if, in this respect, there should be found to exist a close analogy between the volume of Nature and the volume of Revelation? And what if, when we penetrate beneath the letter of Scripture—when we pass beyond the cloudy region of appearances to the brighter realm of realities—we should find this appearance of three *Persons* in the Godhead to be *only* an appearance? What if, looking beyond the letter that killeth to the spirit that giveth life, we should find revealed to us in the higher and truer sense of Holy Scripture only *one* Divine Person, in whom, nevertheless, are three essential elements, represented in the letter by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? It would only be verifying the truth and justness of your own apt illustration of the subject by three branches springing from one trunk, and *appearing* to the superficial observer, who views them “from behind a garden wall,” as *three trees*. When at the same time, to quote the language which you put into the mouth of one of your supposed interlocutors, “If you could look behind the wall, you would find that, after all, these apparently three trees came together at a point be-

yond your sight, and stand upon one root, and make but one tree." The illustration is a good one ;—not good, however, for your tripersonal doctrine, but quite at war with it.

But you yourself perceive the difficulties with which the popular doctrine of the Trinity is embarrassed, and with characteristic manfulness and candor acknowledge them. "I am obliged," you say, "on any ground, to recognize difficulties, and to feel my ignorance ; and at the very best it is a choice of difficulties." "Whichever way I go in the New Testament, if I walk with those who believe in the absolute oneness of God, or with those who believe in the tripersonality of one God, I find many things obscure. Surely, I should change my view if another one were presented to me which reconciled and harmonized every passage of the New Testament." There is a doctrine which I think does this—and which I purpose in future letters to unfold and explain ;—a doctrine alike rational and Scriptural, which, while it maintains a Divine Trinity, shows this Trinity to be of such a nature as is compatible with the strict *personal* unity of God and the supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ. And though I can hardly hope so to unfold and exhibit this new doctrine, that you will be able at once to see it clear of all difficulty, I trust I may be enabled to present it in such light as to convince you that the difficulties attendant upon it are incomparably less than those by which the old and popular doctrine is confessedly embarrassed. However that may be, I cannot doubt but my well-meant effort will be duly appreciated by you ; and sincerely hope that the spirit which pervades my epistles may ever be such as to meet the approval of our common Lord and Master, and advance in some humble degree the interests of His blessed kingdom. In this hope I subscribe myself

Your Friend and Brother,

B. F. BARRETT.

Orange, May 28, 1859.

CONJUGIAL LOVE.

BY JOHN DOUGHTY.

“What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder.”

What shall we sing of more ?

Is there no joy—no raptured bliss in heaven,
No word of fathomless, celestial lore
Borne only from that glorious, sunlit shore,
For those to whom 'tis given ?

Is there no sacred sign

For those whom God amid His own shall number ?
No effigy impressed of things divine,
Which through the very soul shall burn and shine,
To charm the spirit's slumber ?

Lord of our spirit's love !

'Tis Thou who, of thy two-fold name, hath taught us
How love and truth within thy sun above,
Down through creation's spheres in union move,
In union they have sought us !

And by their effigy

Impressed within, the soul still riseth higher,
Mounts on this two-fold union, Lord, to Thee,
And thus fulfills its glorious destiny,
Warmed by Thy sacred fire.

No holier joy can flow

Than that which this Thy effigy doth measure ;
A God's most perfect features here doth show
Its image in our hearts, and thus we know
Creation's loveliest treasure.

Love's sacred, glowing flame

Is kindled, on fair wisdom's altar lighted ;
Deep in the inmost soul they fondly claim
To be, as Thou, a one in life and name,
In holy bonds united.

Truth's manly soul thus shows,
And woman's soul of pure affection ; either
Blent as the crimson color in the rose,
Or as the light in sun-born fire glows,
Forever bound together.

On earth these sou's are twain,
But in their inmost deeps the bond is riven ;
As sound and melody in one refrain
Bound by a never to be broken chain,
They dwell *one soul* in heaven.

This is the holy tie,
Wherein we find the spirit's sweet communion ;
And none but they who seek Thy light on high
Can ever know—of e'en the faintest sigh
Of this conjugal union.

For 'tis the sacred sign,
That to the new-born spirit shall be given,
That every fibre glows with love divine,
And thoughts not lighted at the Saviour's shrine
To darkness now are driven.

ANGELIC TESTIMONY CONCERNING MARRIAGE.

"There is a correspondence between spiritual marriage which is of truth with good, and natural marriage which is of a man with one wife ; and as we [angels] have studied correspondences, we have seen that the church with its truths and goods can by no means be given but with those who live in love truly conjugal with one wife ; for the marriage of good and truth is the church with man. Wherefore all we who are here [in heaven] say, that the husband is truth and his wife is good, and that good cannot love any truth but its own, neither can truth in return love any good but its own ; if any other were loved, internal marriage, which makes the church, would perish, and there would be only external marriage, to which idolatry and not the church corresponds."—*Swedenborg's Conjugal Love*, n. 76.

CONNECTION BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE. *

BY W. H. MULLER.

Is it not a singular circumstance, and of itself an indication of something wanting—of some great *hiatus* in the Catholic and Protestant forms of Christianity—that they should exhibit not only such an estrangement between religious doctrine and the facts and phenomena of natural science, but also that these two departments of knowledge should ever have been looked upon by not a few theologians as inconsistent with, or absolutely hostile to, each other? Since the Divine Being is the author of both Nature and Christianity, should it not be evident *a priori*, that, as He is one, or a Trinity in Unity—a Trinity of Love, Wisdom, and Act—so the Truth or the Reality which emanates from Him, must be one also—a trinity in unity—or Truth on three corresponding or parallel altitudes? And, therefore, that all these departments of that Truth must be mutually connected and mutually illustrative of each other? And hence, that all religious, spiritual or higher truth, must interpenetrate and be contained in, and supported by, all scientific, natural or lower truth? For all lower and grosser things support or contain within them, higher and more subtile things. Thus earth contains water; water, air; and air, heat and light. In the human body, the hard, gross bones support and contain the muscles and soft parts; these latter, the blood-vessels and nerves; the nerves, the subtile nervous fluid; and the whole body, its life-giving soul. We say

*[In the series of interesting and valuable articles on the "Connection between Religion and Science," of which the present is merely introductory, will be included (for the sake of preserving the unity and connection of the whole) the substance of an excellent paper on this subject from the pen of the same writer, which appeared about two years ago in the columns of the *American New Church Repository*. We mention this fact with the confident assurance that, instead of detracting from, it will very considerably add to, the interest with which these papers will be looked for by all those who have had the pleasure of reading the admirable article referred to.—Ed.]

that the current Theology wholly ignores the eternal, omnipresent fact of the co-existence of spiritual truth *in* natural truth ; and makes Religion and Science two distinct affairs, with nothing in common but their authorship—although, for this one-sidedness, it meets with a standing rebuke in the New Testament parables, in which natural truth is made the vehicle of spiritual. This common authorship of Religion and Nature it is obliged to confess, but at the same time it fails to see that such common authorship inevitably involves a kind of family likeness—a parallelism between higher and lower—a correlative or mutually answering attitude in *all* things of Science with *all* things of Religion ; and that, just as in the domain of Natural Science itself, certain peculiarities of the animal kingdom have their analogies and shadows in the vegetable kingdom, and as this in turn has doubtless its own analogies in the mineral kingdom—so, all the natural kingdoms in the complex are but the *material* analogues and embodiments of the higher world of mind, in its endlessly diversified manifestations of the good and the true, the evil and the false.

Apparently, the only use which the current Theology can make of the vast treasures of scientific facts, is to prove (if we except “Butler’s Analogy,” and such like works in which the authors attempt to substantiate the Christian scheme as they understand it, and views of human destiny in the other life, by the analogy of the common course of events in this)—is to prove, we say, the existence of God, and that He is good and wise as well as powerful ; but it never dreams that the works of Creation, in their grandest as well as in their minutest forms and movements, represent and typify the workings of *mind*—of the Divine as well as of the human mind. But the fact is nevertheless so, and becomes at once evident, when we remember, first, that as man was created in the image of God, therefore if the *Divine* mind is typed in the outward creation, the *human* mind—the image of the Divine—must be typed there also ; and secondly, that, as religious or spiritual truth involves the

being, attributes and dealings of God with man on the one hand, it also treats of man, his nature, and the movements of *his* mind towards or away from God, on the other ; and hence, that as created things are full of God, so they are necessarily full of man also. Both Creator and creature find in outward nature a mirror of themselves ; and not only do outward things exhibit the final *result* of mental states and activities, as goodness, wisdom and power, but they also exhibit mind in its successive stages and changes of movement, from aims and intentions to final results. The secret workings of mind are laid bare to itself, as emblemed in the graduated and varied mutations which outward objects undergo. Thus, the whole visible creation is but a vast volume of spiritual truth, to be read, however, only by the light of the science of correspondence between spiritual things and natural ; and the poet uttered a deeper truth than he was probably aware of, when he wrote of

“ books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.”

The current Theology then, both Catholic and Protestant, through its utter unconsciousness of this universal presence of spiritual or religious truth in all things of nature, and holding, for aught that appears to the contrary, that none or but little of such truth can be found outside of the written Word of Revelation (which is, however, but universal spiritual truth condensed into a luminous focus, and adapted to man in all moral states), this theology, we would now remark, presents a wide contrast to the very *oldest* and the very *latest* system of religious doctrine that has dawned upon the world. For the oldest religions, the remains of which have come down to us, as well as the latest to which we have alluded, viz., the system of the New Church, have this in common, viz., *that spiritual or religious truth is, in both systems, recognized, shadowed forth and emblemed in the objects and phenomena of the outward universe.* This is the secret of the old mythologies. They conveyed religious ideas under the visible symbols borrowed from the three kingdoms of na-

ture, the animal, vegetable and inorganic. In all the old religious systems, doctrine seems to have been inseparably blended with the natural science of the period. "The old extinct forms of heathenism," to quote the language of a late writer, "Etrurian, Egyptian, Phœnician, and Babylonian, had all their Cosmogonies. In the wild mythology of Scandinavia, which, even in our own country (England) continues to give the names of its uncouth deities to the days of the week, there is a strange genesis, not only of the heavens and earth, but of the gods also. It has, besides, its scheme of the universe in its great mundane tree of three vast roots, celestial, terrestrial and infernal, which support the land, the sea, the sky and all things. The leading religions of the East, which still survive, such as Buddhism, Brahminism and Parseeism, have all their astronomy, geography, meteorology, and geology, existing as component parts of their several systems." * Thus in these ancient systems, what purported to be the science of the period, formed an inseparable part of the religious belief. The two were mutually interwoven, and both must stand or fall together. And as it has ever been a more easy matter to prove the science false first, and then the religion, "this physical department," says the same author, "has ever proved the vulnerable part of false religion." And the missionaries to the East have found no more successful plan to loosen the hold of false religion on the native mind, than to bring scientific truth into a direct antagonism with the false science of Parseeism, Brahminism and Buddhism; "and by this means, the general falsity of these systems has been so plainly shown, that it has become a matter of doubt whether a single educated native of any considerable ability, in reality believes in them."

Now this historical fact, of the blending by the ancients of theology with the real or supposed phenomena of nature,

* Hugh Miller in "Testimony of the Rocks," Chapter on The Discoverable and the Revealed.

is a very remarkable one, when taken in connection with the philosophical fact, that truth of all degrees is, like its Author, present in all created things, and is visible whenever the mind is prepared to see it. The historical fact bears witness to the philosophical fact ; and this circumstance is not at all invalidated by any amount of apparent absurdity, either in the credited science, or in the religion of these ancient nations. Let both be as wild and fanciful as they may, the simple fact of their union and interblending, is in perfect harmony with the eternal and universal truth, that all natural science is interpenetrated by spiritual truth or religious science. The interblending of religion and science is one thing—the truth or falsity of the popular religion or science is another. Granting both to be false they were, nevertheless, the application, although an erroneous application, of a true principle, viz. : the principle that spiritual truth is contained in natural truth, and forms a one with it, like soul and body. Does not the possession, by the ancients, of this true principle, notwithstanding its false and fanciful application, point us to a remote and primitive period—that of the innocent childhood of the human race, when both the principle and its true application were known ? that is, to a period when the human race, being in their primitive innocence, were not only fully aware that all spiritual truth was typed by the things of the natural world, but also knew what was true religious doctrine, and how its multiform truths were represented in the countless objects of nature ? in short, to a period when mankind were in the full possession of the knowledge of the correspondence between spiritual and natural things ? This inference appears inevitable ; for on no other theory does it seem possible to account for the possession, by succeeding times, of this true principle, although, as we have seen, it was falsely applied. With the latter ages, this principle remained somewhat longer, for it could not easily be forgotten ; but the countless forms of its true application were lost, owing to the moral lapse of the human mind—to the

gradual decline of human nature from innate rectitude and its inevitable consequence—loss of true religious doctrine.

True religion was thus succeeded by false. What was true became first perverted, afterwards wholly falsified ; but still these false doctrines were, as previously, represented by images and descriptions of natural objects, and various fanciful combinations of them, which, embodied in wood or stone, became at a still later and more ignorant age, objects of idolatrous worship. Hence we have the various mythologies of the old nations, in which the different virtues and vices, the passions and powers of man—the various beliefs concerning superior beings—the activities and influences, real or supposed, of natural objects—were all made to take visible form and shape, in accordance with the principle that things which transcend the senses can be represented by objects of which the senses *do* take cognizance, through the eternal and invariable law of correspondence between nature and spirit, or between the things of the natural world and the things of the mental or spiritual world.

And so it has come to pass that these ancient mythologies, as they have descended to us, present a union of false religion with false science ; although the *principle* of this union is one eternal truth.

Now here is the point to which we would call special attention : This true principle of *correspondence*, so long lost to the world, has been restored in the writings of the New Church, together with *true* religious doctrine ; and these two elements meet, in the present advanced condition of man's knowledge of nature and its laws, with a true natural science. From this it results, that the marriage union of religion with science, through the medium of the eternal principle or law of the correspondence of natural things with spiritual, is once more inaugurated on the earth. And it will never again be dissolved. The doctrines of the New Church are in perfect agreement with the ancient religions so far as respects the re-assertion of this eternal law of cor-

respondence ; while they differ in that they present to mankind a *true* religion, whose leading features, as well as most minute details, may all be illustrated by the facts of a *true* science, and thus demonstrate incontestably that all truth is a one.

And thus has the revolution of ages again brought mankind back into a light which had long since set. Astronomers tell us that the solar systems of our own cluster of suns, are all revolving spirally around that line or ring of magnetic forces whose track lies in the milky way, the circumference of the cluster ; hence the planets as they revolve around their respective suns, and the satellites as they move around the planets, all describe spiral movements through space ; and thus in their progress, these bodies arrive repeatedly at points, which are alike as to the *side* of the spiral, on which they lie ; yet the latest reached is always in advance of the previous one. Analogous is the movement that may be traced in the progression of human affairs. There appear to be cycles of movement which bring the human race to conjunctures or periods, which in some respects are similar, yet in others widely different—the difference marking a great advancement. The rise, culmination and decline of the various forms which civilization has assumed in its westward march around the globe—the Assyrian, Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Arabian, Mediæval, Italian—up to the modern European, and even to the Pacific-reaching Anglo-Saxon—all these would probably from this point of view, present much that was similar in such corresponding periods. And so—like the cycles of the material universe, and like the lesser cycles of human progress—has the *religious* element in human affairs also performed *its* grand revolution, and brought mankind back into the dawn of a glorious spiritual light, which illumined the earth in its primeval period ; but which sank out of sight long ages since, only to rise again with a seven-fold lustre at this era of the Second Advent, when the great Lord of Na-

ture and Revelation is coming in the clouds of heaven, or illuminating the obscurities of the letter of the Divine Word by the very *science of correspondences* so long lost, yet dimly traced in the old mythologies.

With this prelude we proceed to exhibit something of the connection between truth as drawn from the Bible, and truth as drawn from the works of creation. What is the connection between religion and Science, or between Revelation and Nature?

We all know what is understood by Revelation, and what by Natural Science. By Revelation we understand a communication of the Divine thoughts to the human mind clothed in human language, adapted to the comprehension of the human understanding, and designed to be used by that understanding for the great end of enlightening and advancing the spiritual life of man—the life that involves harmonious relations with God, the central Source of all that is good and true. Without this Revelation, without this communication of the Divine mind and the Divine instruction to the mind of man, he must inevitably have remained in gross darkness as to all things relating to himself as an immortal being, created to live forever and to be happy in the degree that he resembles and approaches the goodness and wisdom of his Maker. All this necessary knowledge was far above his unaided capacity—could never have been attained by his own researches, and could only have descended to him from Above. This Revelation, so much needed, we believe to be found within the volume termed, by way of pre-eminence, the Bible, or the “Book.”

By Natural Science, we all understand the knowledge of the objects and phenomena of the natural world; as a knowledge of the globe we inhabit, with its countless tribes of being in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms; a knowledge of the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon and stars that roll around us; a knowledge, finally, of man himself—both as to the structure and functions of his body, and the organization and powers of his mind; a knowledge

of man, not only individual but collective, as grouped into nations, tribes and families. All these various subjects of human knowledge are comprehended in the wide circle of what may be called the Natural Sciences, as Astronomy, Geology, Geography, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics ; the branches termed Optics, Acoustics, Hydraulics, &c. ; then History, Ethnology, Political Economy, Metaphysics, Phrenology, &c. All these may be said to embrace a knowledge of natural things as distinguished from a knowledge of spiritual things, or things relating to religion and to man's spiritual nature. These natural sciences may be prosecuted to a great extent by their votaries, without the latter having any reference to God and a future life ; and in their practical application, these natural sciences subserve immediately either the physical well-being of man, or minister to the development of the faculties of his natural mind only ; while the investigation of religious truth in the pages of the Bible continually involves the ideas of God, of a future life, and of moral right and wrong ; and in *its* practical application, subserves the advancement of man's spiritual mind and spiritual life. A man may, in a certain sense, be a good Chemist, Mathematician, Geologist, Astronomer, Botanist, Naturalist, &c., and yet live without God in the world ;—may be an infidel, an utterly irreligious character, and thus a merely natural man. But he who studies religious truth, who explores the Word of Revelation and applies the knowledge thus acquired to practice, cannot fail to develop his spiritual mind ; for religious truth has reference solely to man's spiritual and immortal nature, and to his relation to God and to all that is good and right.

Such then, in brief, is the distinction which may be drawn between Revelation and Natural Science, or between religious truth and natural truth.

(To be continued.)

“ Reason, best Reason, is to imperfect man,
An effort only, and a noble aim.”

MONDAY MORNING.

"Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work."

Now, like the innocence, by angels wrought
Into the human mind in infancy,
Image and groundwork to the opening thought
Of Heaven, which else would undiscovered be ;
So may the spirit of the Sabbath past
Remain with us through all the coming week.
A light, a monitor, a saving power,
That every duty, every trial hour
May be imbued with holy influence thence.
Thus will our six days' labor bring at last
The better Sabbath which we so much seek—
Rest from temptation and from sin release,
Delights of Love and Wisdom's innocence,
Repose in God and everlasting peace.

J. R.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

The ideas in regard to a future life which have hitherto prevailed among Christians, have been for the most part so dim and shadowy as to afford the devout believer but little comfort—hardly a solid ground for hope. As soon as we learn that man is immortal—that our life reaches onward beyond the tomb through countless ages—such questions as the following force themselves naturally upon every thoughtful mind : What will be our state and condition in the great Hereafter ? What is *death*, or what is there of man that dies, and what of him that is immortal ? What change, if any, in our personality and consciousness, in our intellectual and moral capabilities, in our social relations and enjoyments, is wrought by death ? Will the distinction of sex be preserved in the future life, and shall we still con-

tinue to exist in the human form? Will those who are acquainted with each other in the present life, know each other in the life to come? Will those who have loved each other here, be permitted to love hereafter? Shall we be the subjects of pleasure and pain, of joy and sorrow, of happiness and misery in the world to come? And in what will our joys or our sorrows—our happiness or our misery consist? Will one or the other be dealt out to us arbitrarily, or will it be the unfailing result of obedience or disobedience to some eternal laws? Shall we grow old or young, or remain as death finds us, through the ages of eternity? Will those who die in infancy all be happy, or will some of them, as a portion of the Christian church have long believed, be counted as “reprobates?” Will they remain forever in an infantile form, or will they grow to the full stature of manhood in the future life as in this? And will they increase likewise in knowledge and wisdom? Will the future life be one of progress, or of eternal and unalterable fixedness? Shall we find occupation there—suitable spheres for the activity of our mental and bodily powers? And what will our occupations be? Shall we have the self-same material bodies that we have now, or more glorious spiritual bodies? And with what scenes and objects shall we be surrounded in the future life, and what principle or law will determine our surroundings? Shall we dwell in houses, have food and raiment? And if so, how will these be procured, and what will determine their quality for each one? Shall we think, reason, sympathize, and love?—shall we run, laugh, pray and sing? Will there be, in the life to come, anything in the nature of wealth or poverty? And in what will these consist, and what will determine for each the quality or amount of his inheritance?

These, and a hundred other like questions naturally suggest themselves to every inquiring mind, as soon as the belief in a future life becomes firmly fixed. Yet how very few of these questions are satisfactorily answered, or even answered at all, in the literal sense of the Scripture? There-

fore the Old theology wisely confesses itself unable to answer them. It has almost nothing to say—almost nothing to teach, on these and other like interesting questions; and what little it attempts to teach fails to answer the just demands of reason. Yet all these questions are fully answered in the revelations that have been made for the New Church;—answered, too, in a manner at once so rational, clear and convincing, that the best minds of this age, as soon as they have fairly grasped the teachings of Swedenborg on the subject of the future life, are forced to admit that no other religious teacher has ever uttered upon this subject a tithe of the wisdom that his writings contain.

These thoughts have been suggested by a well-written article on the “Modern Doctrine of a Future Life,” that appeared in the May 21st issue of the *Christian Inquirer*, a well-conducted weekly paper (Unitarian) published in the city of New York. The writer commences with saying: “While treating of the various Protestant views of the future life, it would be a glaring defect to overlook the remarkable doctrine on that subject published by Emanuel Swedenborg, and now held by the intelligent growing body of believers called after his name”—*popularly* so called; but they *call themselves* simply New Churchmen, because they accept the doctrines that have been revealed for the purpose of establishing and building up a New Church. And the same kind and generous spirit which this first sentence breathes, pervades the entire article; though the “two or three suggestions of criticism” towards the close do not exhibit the logical powers nor the breadth or comprehensiveness, which the intellectual calibre and the familiarity with Swedenborg evinced in other parts of the article, would have led us to expect. The writer, whom we take to be a distinguished Unitarian clergyman, shows himself quite familiar with Swedenborg’s teachings on the subject of the future life, and exhibits a fairness and generosity characteristic of the writers of that denomination, but which we rarely meet with in the religious journals of other sects—

not always, we regret to add, in professedly New Church journals. The following extracts, embracing more than half the article, will no doubt interest all our readers :

“Swedenborg conceives man to be an organized receptacle of truth and love from God. He is an imperishable spiritual body placed for a season of probation in a perishable material body. Every moment receiving the essence of his being afresh from God, and returning it through the fruition of its uses devoutly rendered in conscious obedience and joyous worship, he is at once a subject of personal, and a medium of the Divine happiness. The will is the power of man’s life, and the understanding is its form. When the will is disinterested love, and the understanding is celestial truth, then man fulfills the end of his being, and his home is heaven ; he is a spirit-frame into which the goodness of God perpetually flows, is humbly acknowledged, gratefully enjoyed, and piously returned. But when his will is hatred or selfishness, and his understanding is falsehood or evil, then his powers are abused, his destiny inverted, and his fate hell. While in the body in this world, he is placed in freedom, on probation, between these two alternatives.”

Then, after alluding to the different realms into which Swedenborg divides the moral universe, and remarking briefly upon the intermediate state or “World of Spirits,” and the nature of the two kinds of influx, mediate and immediate, which the writer correctly explains, he proceeds :

“The whole invisible world—heaven, hell, and the middle state—is peopled solely from the different families of the human race occupying the numerous material globes of the universe. The good, on leaving the fleshly body, are angels ; the bad, demons. There is no angel nor demon who was created such at first. Satan is not a personality, but is a figurative term standing for the whole complex of hell. In the invisible world, time and space in one sense cease to be ; in another sense they remain unchanged. They virtually cease because all our present measures of them are annihilated ; they virtually remain because exact correspondences to them are left. To spirits, time is no longer measured by the revolution of planets, but by the succession of inward states ; space is measured, not by way-marks and the traversing of distances, but by inward similitudes and dissimilitudes. Those who are unlike are sundered by gulfs of dif-

ference. Those who are alike are together in their interiors. Thought and love, forgetfulness and hate, are not hampered by temporal and spatial boundaries. Spiritual forces and beings spurn material impediments, and are united or separate, reciprocally visible or invisible, mutually conscious or unconscious, according to their own laws of kindred or alien adaptedness.

The soul—the true man—is its own organized and deathless body, and when it leaves its earthly house of flesh it knows the only resurrection, and the cast-off frame returns to the dust forever. Swedenborg repeatedly affirms with emphasis that no one is born for hell, but that all are born for heaven, and that when any one comes into hell it is from his own free fault. He asserts that every infant, wheresoever born, whether within the Church or out of it, whether of pious parents or of impious, when he dies is received by the Lord, and educated in heaven, and becomes an angel. A central principle of which he never loses sight, is, that “a life of charity, which consists in acting sincerely and justly in every function, in every engagement, and in every work, from a heavenly motive, according to the Divine laws, is possible to every one, and infallibly leads to heaven.” It does not matter whether the person leading such a life be a Christian or a Gentile. The only essential is, that his ruling motive be Divine and his life be in truth and good.

The Swedenborgian doctrine concerning Christ and his mission is, that he was the infinite God incarnate—not incarnate for the purpose of expiating human sin and purchasing a ransom for the lost by vicarious sufferings, but for the sake of suppressing the rampant power of the hells, weakening the influx of the infernal spirits, setting an example to men, and revealing many important truths. The advantage of the Christian over the Pagan is, that the former is enlightened by the celestial knowledge contained in the Bible, and animated by the affecting motives presented in the drama of the Divine incarnation. There is no probation after this life. Just as one is on leaving the earth, he goes into the spiritual world. There his ruling affection determines his destiny, and that affection can never be extirpated or changed to all eternity. After death, evil life cannot in any manner or degree be altered to good life, nor infernal love be transmuted to angelic love, inasmuch as every spirit from head to foot is in quality such as his love is, and hence such as his life is—so that to transmute this life into the opposite is altogether to destroy the spirit. It were

easier, says Swedenborg, to change a night-bird into a dove, or an owl into a bird of paradise, than to change a subject of hell into a subject of heaven, after the line of death has been crossed. But why the crossing of that line should make such an infinite difference he does not explain ; nor does he prove it as a fact."*

The moral reason and charitable heart of Swedenborg vehemently revolted from the Calvinistic doctrines of predestination and vicarious atonement, and the group of

* [Swedenborg does repeatedly explain why one who leaves this world in a confirmed state of evil, that is, in a hellish state, cannot afterwards be reformed or brought into a heavenly state. Thus he says :

"This is the case with the things relating to spiritual birth, that reception must be altogether in the natural principle [*i. e.* the natural degree of the mind]. And this is the reason why, during man's regeneration, the natural principle is first prepared to receive, and so far as this principle is made receptible, so far interior truths and goods can be brought forth and multiplied. This also is the reason why, if the natural man be not prepared to receive the truths and goods of faith in the life of the body, he cannot receive them in the other life, thus he cannot be saved. This is what is meant by the observation so generally in use, that, as the tree falls so it lies, or, as man dies so is his state ; for man hath along with him in the other life all the natural memory, or the memory of the external man, but in that life it is not allowed to use it ; wherefore it is there as a *foundation plane*, into which interior truths and goods fall ; and if that plane is not receptible of the truths and goods which flow in from an interior principle, the interior goods and truths are either extinguished, or perverted, or rejected."—*A. C.* 4588.

And elsewhere Swedenborg gives, what seems to us, a profoundly philosophical explanation of this knotty point, but an explanation which could hardly be understood—certainly one which we should not expect would be entirely satisfactory—without a knowledge of the discrete degrees belonging to the mind. (See *A. C.* 5145, 9061, 10,243, and *H. & H.* 480.) Besides, life of whatever kind can exist only in organized forms ; and the quality of the life depends ever upon the nature or form of the organization. And the external, natural or ultimate degree of the mind, which receives influx through the higher degrees, and determines *by its form* the quality of the life received, takes on its peculiar organic form in the natural world ; and that form cannot be changed after a man has entered the spiritual world. Accordingly Swedenborg says : "I have heard from the angels that the life of any one cannot after death be changed, because it is organized according to his love, and hence his works ; and that, if it should be changed, the organization would be pulled to pieces, which can in no case be done ; also that a change of organization is given solely in the material body, and cannot at all be given in the spiritual body after the former has been rejected."—*C. L.* 525.

But the passages in which Swedenborg has explained why the ruling love cannot be changed after death, had, we presume, been overlooked by the writer in the *Inquirer*. They are not of frequent occurrence ; and therefore a person not thoroughly acquainted with the New Church writings, might very innocently suppose that no such explanation was ever given by him.—*Ed.*]

thoughts that cluster around them. He always protests against these dogmas, refutes them with varied power and consistency; and the leading principles of his own system are creditable to human nature, and attribute no unworthiness to the character of God. A debt of eternal gratitude is due to Swedenborg that his influence, certainly destined to be powerful and lasting, is so clearly calculated to advance the interests at once of philosophic intelligence, social affection, and true piety. The superiorities of his view of the future life over those which it seeks to supplant, are weighty and numerous. The following may be reckoned among the most prominent:

First, without predicating of God any aggravated severity or casting the faintest shadow on His benevolence, it gives us the most appalling realization of the horribleness of sin, and of its consequences. God is commonly represented—in effect, at least—as flaming with anger against sinners, and forcibly flinging them into the unappeasable fury of Tophet, where His infinite vengeance may forever satiate itself on them. But Swedenborg says, God is incapable of hatred or wrath; he casts no one into hell; but the wicked go where they belong by their own election, from the inherent fitness and preference of their ruling love. The evil man desires to be in hell because there he finds his food, employment, and home; in heaven he would suffer unutterable agonies from every circumstance. The wicked go into hell by the necessary and benignant love of God, not by His indignation; and their retributions are in their own characters, not in their prison-house. This does not flout and trample all magnanimity, nor shock the heart of piety; and yet, showing us men compelled to prefer wallowing in the filth and iniquities of hell, clinging to the very evils whose pangs transfix them, it gives us the direst of all the impressions of sin, and beneath the lowest deep of the popular hell opens to our shuddering conceptions a deep of loathsomeness immeasurably lower still.

Secondly the Swedenborgian doctrine of the conditions of salvation, or reprobation, when compared with the popular doctrine, is marked by striking depth of insight, justice and liberality. Every man is free. Every man has power to receive the influx of truth and good from the Lord, and convert it to its blessed and saving uses—piety towards God, good-will towards the neighbor, and all kinds of good works. Who does this, no matter in what land or age he lives, becomes an heir of heaven. Who perverts those divine gifts

to selfishness and unrighteous deeds becomes a subject of hell. No mere opinion, no mere profession, no mere ritual services, no mere external obedience—not all these things together—can save a man, nor their absence condemn him ; but the controlling motive of his life, the central and ruling love which constitutes the substance of his being—this decides every man's doom. The view is simple, reasonable, just, necessary. And so is the doctrine of degrees accompanying it ; namely, that there are in heaven different grades and qualities of exaltation and delight, and in hell of degradation and woe, for different men, according to their capacities and deserts. A profoundly ethical character pervades the scheme, and the great stamp of the law is over all.

Thirdly, a manifest advantage of Swedenborg's doctrine over the popular doctrine is the intimate connection it establishes between the present and the future, the visible and the invisible, God and man. Heaven and hell are not distinct localities, entrance into which is to be won or avoided by moral artifices or sacramental subterfuges, but they are states of being, depending on personal good or evil. God is not throned at the heart or on the apex of the universe, where at some remote epoch we hope to go and see Him, but He is the Life feeding our lives freshly every instant. The spiritual world, with all its hosts, sustains and arches, fills and envelopes us. Death is the drooping of the outer body, the lifting of an opaque veil, and we are among the spirits, unchanged, as we were before. Judgment is not a tribunal dawning on the close of the world's weary centuries, but the momentary assimilation of a celestial or an infernal love leading to states and acts, rewards and retributions, corresponding. Before this view the dead universe becomes a live transparency, overwritten with the will, tremulous with the breath, and irradiate with the illumination of God.

An exceedingly lucid, concise and accurate statement—of course, not meant to be an *exhaustive* statement—of the New Church doctrine of a future life, and a just appreciation of its many and great advantages. And all genuine New Churchmen—all, we mean, whose hearts have become imbued in some measure with the *spirit* of the New Jerusalem, cannot fail to recognize and feel grateful for this fair and truthful presentation of our views concerning the other life.

Such perfect candor and fairness in a theological writer when exhibiting the views of those belonging to a different communion or church from his own, is worthy of special notice. It is beautiful as it is rare. But in the organ of what *other* religious denomination has there ever been such a full, honest, candid and intelligent statement of the views of the New Church upon any single subject? Who does not know, that, if our views are ever referred to at all by the journals of other denominations, it is almost uniformly with a sweeping condemnation or a sneer ;—and often are they grossly misrepresented and caricatured even by clergymen themselves. But a better day seems dawning ; and it is highly creditable to our Unitarian friends, that one of their organs should so nobly lead the way in the simple matter of truth and honesty when setting before its readers the views of the New Church on any subject. Nor is this the first time that a Unitarian organ has merited the thanks of New Churchmen for candor and truthfulness when speaking of our views.

We ought to add that the writer in the *Inquirer*—and this only renders his candor and honesty the more conspicuous—does not accept all the views of the New Church concerning the future life, as set forth in his brief synopsis. For example, he “regrets that the Swedenborgian view of the future life should be burdened and darkened with the terrible error of the dogma of eternal damnation, spreading over the state of all the subjects of the hells the pall of unmitigable hopelessness, denying that they can ever make the slightest ameliorating progress.” This shows that the writer does not clearly understand Swedenborg’s doctrine on this subject ; and this is not strange, when we consider how many professed New Churchmen there are, who have failed to grasp fully and perfectly his meaning on this point. The best we can do now, is, to refer him to a brief article on “the use of punishments in the hells,” which appeared in the March No. of the *Swedenborgian*.

“Neither,” says he, “can we admit in general the claim

made by Swedenborg, and by his disciples, that the way in which he arrived at his system of theology elevates it to a rank of a Divine revelation." Here, again, it is possible that the writer speaks from partial or incorrect knowledge. Neither Swedenborg nor "his disciples"—the students of his works—claim that his writings are divine compositions, like the Holy Scriptures. We do not claim *inspiration*, in the proper sense of the word, either for the man or his writings. Swedenborg's own claim was simply this : That he was specially and in a remarkable manner and degree illumined of the Lord ; that his spiritual senses were opened, and he was thereby intromitted into the spiritual world, and enabled to see and describe the scenery and inhabitants of all its various realms. And we can only say for ourselves, that, after having carefully examined every theory that has yet been broached with a view of solving the problem presented without admitting Swedenborg's claim—including that of the writer in the *Inquirer*—we find that none of them will stand the test of fair and thorough criticism. When we attempt to "explain the unparalleled phenomenon of his theological works," by means of any one of these man-invented theories, we find difficulties insuperable meeting us at every turn. And it is only by admitting Swedenborg's own simple claim—a claim intrinsically reasonable and probable—that the difficulties all vanish. We, therefore solve the problem here presented in the way which seems to us the easiest, most probable, and most rational. Let others do the same.

We cannot, however, withhold an expression of surprise, that a writer capable of penning so able and candid an article as this in the *Inquirer*, could rest for one moment in the belief that "the secret" of Swedenborg's supposed illumination "was the abnormal frequent or chronic turning of his mind into what is called the ecstatic or clairvoyant state ;" and that in this abnormal state, "he treated his subjective conceptions as objective realities ;"—a theory which makes one of the greatest, wisest and best of men that ever lived

—a man, who, according to this writer's own admission, has unfolded more and higher truth concerning the future life than all other writers on this subject whose names adorn the annals of the Christian Church—a man, whose view of the conditions of salvation or reprobation are admitted to be “simple, reasonable, just, necessary,” and “when compared with the popular doctrine, to be marked by striking depth of insight, justice, and liberality”—a theory, we say, which makes this great and truly wise man merely a harmless kind of lunatic ! The great Swede after all was only a clever dreamer ! The reveries of his own brain were so very vivid, that, to him, they appeared as “objective realities !” “He believed his interior contemplations were accurate visions of facts, and took the strange procession of systematic reveries through his teeming brain for a scenic revelation of the exhaustive mysteries of heaven and hell.

‘ Each wondrous guess *beheld* the truth it sought,
And inspiration flashed from what was thought. ’ ”

This is no new theory. And while it might do for Dr. Pond, or some of the Professors at Andover or Princeton, it is hardly worthy of one who evinces such philosophic insight, intellectual integrity, and logical acumen, as the writer in the *Inquirer*.

But we are in no mood for criticising, and did not take up our pen with any such intent. We feel grateful to this writer for his very fair and candid statement of our views of the future life, as well as for the favorable opinion of them for the most part which he has expressed. And we doubt not but a mind at once so candid and logical as his, will yet come to see that his exceptions to Swedenborg's doctrine on this subject—or to portions of it, for he accepts the largest part—are the result of a previous confirmation of his own mind in erroneous views, rather than, as he now imagines, of any defect or error in the doctrine as set forth by Swedenborg.

B.

THE LAW OF THE SIN OFFERING.

A few days since I read Mr. Bayley's beautiful sermon upon the sacrifice of birds ; and, turning to the Divine Word, one of the first subjects that excited my attention was the "sin offering"—and at once the question arose in my mind, What is signified by the "sin offering?" I could clearly see that animals represented our various affections, and birds our thoughts—and offering these in worship was an acknowledgment that all feelings and thoughts flow from our Lord. But the "sin offering?" it dwelt upon my mind. Accidentally, as it were, a paper, upon which I had written long ago, fell from my Bible. I read it with a curious feeling. It was in my hand-writing, and I remembered the bit of paper ; but the thoughts were as if from another flowing into my mind. I will copy this scrap of writing, because it helped me to understand the sin offering. The thoughts were under a very comprehensive head, viz. :—"What I must try to avoid."

"In the first place, I must avoid an excited and exaggerated manner of talking, and in all my words remember that there is an ultimatum from either heaven or hell ; and as the one or the other prevails, so is my character forming for one or the other place. Hence, all sarcasm, ridicule, puns, and innuendoes are to be avoided. Secondly, the *tones* of my voice must be watched—a querulous, fault-finding tone, or a cold, reproachful tone may express unamiable states, when the words are not much.

"I must strive unceasingly, with the thought of our Lord in my heart, to prevent the ultimatum of evil. I must cultivate a sense of *duty* in all things—even to eat and sleep for the body's necessities, not to pander to the sensual appetites, and thus deprave the whole spirit. I must try and realize that I am an *organ* of the Lord's life, and I must keep myself pure as a recipient vessel : for my state must unavoidably affect all who come within my sphere.

"I must try in all things to follow the leadings of the

Lord's Providence, and not seek to make new duties for myself, but simply, faithfully, and truly to do the duties He has given : for He knows how to adapt our work to His plans—and if our duty *seems* little, we must——”

There ends the scrap. I turned it over, wishing it had gone on—yet I had written it! All at once I thought, From *whence* comes the light in your mind that enables you to see your faults? And at once my soul bowed before the inmost Divine Sun, and I said, “Lord, it is only in Thy light that we can see sin in ourselves;” and when we have wounded a good affection or perverted a pure thought, and see it and acknowledge it to the Lord, we make a “sin offering” upon the altar of our hearts.

“Ye are the Temple of the living God.”

*

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

A PRESBYTERIAN CLERGYMAN ON AMUSEMENTS.—It is interesting to note the change that is going on among religionists of all denominations in respect to the subject of amusements, and to see how many of the puritanical and absurd notions of half a century ago are gradually giving way to the higher and more rational views of the New Dispensation. We learn from the *Christian Inquirer*, that Rev. J. L. Corning, Pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Buffalo, N. Y., has published a work on the Christian Law of Amusements, (Phinney & Co., Buffalo,) in which even *dancing*, which has so long been “the great scare-crow of the ecclesiastical conscience,” is approved of under proper restrictions as to dress, late hours, &c. It is an encouraging sign when ministers of the strictest sects begin to see and acknowledge that aceticism and gloom are not among the Christian virtues; and when they publicly commend mirthfulness, sociability and recreation. What would have been thought fifty years ago, if a Presbyterian minister had given utterance to sentiments like the following, quoted in the *Inquirer* from Mr. Corning's work?

“I can easily see how, in perfect accordance with the laws of the human constitution, one of you might, in order to drive away the vapors that hang around your mind, give an hour on Wednesday afternoon to ball-playing or skating, with the *definite purpose* of preparing for the religious exercises of Wednesday evening.”

“For Payson's austere melancholy, a weak stomach, instead of Divine grace, ought to have the credit.”

PROFESSOR BUSH.—We regret to learn that Professor Bush, whose removal to Rochester, N. Y., was announced in our April issue, has not experienced that improvement in his health which his friends anticipated from a change of residence. He still continues very feeble—so much so, as to awaken serious apprehensions as to the final issue. In a letter dated June 3d, he writes: “My health continues very poor, and the difficulty is to determine the exact nature of the disease. There are strong symptoms of an organic derangement of the heart; but, together with this, is the principal trouble of a most astonishing weakness of limbs that makes it next to impossible to walk but a few rods at a time, and that like an old man of ninety. Chills and fever—of the genuine *malarious* kind—have been also among my visitations, though their force appears now a good deal broken. But I have almost constantly some degree of lurking fever in the system, which it is extremely difficult to expel. It will wear me out eventually if not relieved. Indeed, I am living from day to day as near the terminus of my earthly course. Yet it may be considerably prolonged.”

He adds that his friends must not think it strange if they hear directly from him but seldom, as it is only a small part of the day that he is able to write at all.

DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH IN POPULAR LITERATURE.—It is interesting to note the providential arrangements for the diffusion of spiritual light, and to see how rapidly the channels, through which the doctrines of the New Church are being disseminated, are multiplying in our times. These doctrines are so evidently true, and so accordant with the highest conceptions of the purest and best minds, that almost every popular writer of any acknowledged merit, receives many of them by that common influx, which produces what is aptly denominated common sense. A man who allows himself to think freely and rationally upon religious subjects—unless he be a pretty *bad* man—is almost certain to think quite in accordance with the views of the New Church on many points, and contrary to those of the Old. Accordingly we find our best popular literature becoming more and more imbued with the spirit of the New Church; and very often we meet with quite a distinct statement of some of its leading doctrines.—Glancing at a number of the *New York Ledger*—a weekly newspaper said to have a larger circulation than any other paper on the continent—not long since, we fell upon the following, which illustrates our meaning. The writer (Dr. Henry W. Wadsworth) in a story called “Raphael, or the Fugitives of Paris,” makes one of his characters, while awaiting the hour of execution, say to his comrades:

"Courage, my friends! There is another world for brave spirits! Twenty-four hours hence, the red cross of Jesus being our hope, we shall be living in a new life, entering upon a glorious existence! For the soul—the strong heart, is the *man*—not the body, which Robespierre is welcome to! Let us remember that we are immortal, and that we can never really *die*."

POPULATION OF THE GLOBE.—Some interesting facts in regard to the present population of our globe, are presented in a recent paper prepared by C. F. W. Dieterici, Director of the statistical Department of Berlin. From a condensed view of the leading results of this important document, as published in the June 4th issue of the *Century*, we learn that the present population of our globe is 1,288,000,000, or about thirteen hundred millions in round numbers; that the average population to the square mile in Europe is about 93; in Asia, 60; in Africa, 22; in America, 5; in Australia, 1. The greatest density of population in any Kingdom is exhibited in Belgium, where it is 548 to the square mile. Single districts in Rhenish Prussia show as high as 700 to the square mile.

Dividing the population of the globe according to creeds, and taking the round numbers, 1,300,000,000, as the total, the leading footings are:

Christians, 335,000,000, or 25.77 per cent. of the whole.

Jews, 5,000,000, or 0.38 per cent.

Asiatic Religions, 600,000,000 or 46.15 per cent.

Mohammedan, 160,000,000, or 12.31 per cent.

Pagans, 200,000,000, or 15.39 per cent.

The 335,000,000 Christians are again divided by the same authority into—

170,000,000 Roman Catholics, or 50.7 per cent. of the whole

89,000,000 Protestants, or 26.6 per cent.

76,000,000 Greek Catholics, or 22.7 per cent.

PERSONAL.—Rev. T. L. Harris (author of the "*Arcana of Christianity*") is now in London, preaching at the Marylebone Institute—so says the *N. Y. Tribune* of June 11th.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Sermons by the Rev. John Caird.—The May No. of the *London Intellectual Repository* contains a notice, with some extracts, of a volume of sermons recently published by this distinguished Scotch divine—the author of the very excellent discourse on "*Religion in Common Life*,"

published by command of her Majesty the Queen of England some three or four years ago, and re-published in our own country and read admiringly by men of every denomination. From the notice and the extracts in the *Intellectual*, we infer that the pages of this volume gleam with the light of the New Jerusalem, and are just what we might expect from the author of "Religion in Common Life." The writer of the notice in the *Intellectual* commences with these remarks :

"In the volume before us we have one among many evidences at the present time, of that increased power of spiritual discernment and greater liberty of thought and speech, which the angels, through Swedenborg, foretold as the effect of the Last Judgment and the coming of the Son of Man in power. There is not a sentence which would lead us to infer that the author is acquainted with Swedenborg's writings, yet almost every sermon might have been written by a New Church minister, and preached before a New Church congregation with pleasure and profit to the hearers."

And the extracts given by the reviewer go to justify this commendation. Take the following in illustration of the author's doctrine of life, as distinguished from the old doctrine of salvation by faith alone :

"The inquiry must be—'Am I leading a holy life, from real, heartfelt self-devotion to Christ? Are my inward principles, feelings, motives, such as will approve themselves to the eye of Him who seeth in secret? Do I not only outwardly abstain from what is wrong, but do I hate and shrink from sin in my inmost heart—pained when I am betrayed into it, glad when I gain the victory over it? Am I exercising a control not over my outward conduct merely, but over my thoughts and affections, over my secret habits, dispositions, tempers? Is God so revered and loved in the inmost shrine of my being that I strive to expel thence every evil thought, every vain, impure, selfish feeling, and to keep the temple of a pure heart sacred to Him alone?'"

Dr. Caird seems clearly to apprehend this New Church truth, that only kindred natures, or those who are in similar spiritual states, can truly see or know each other ;—that only like ones can dwell together in the other world, and that heaven itself would be no heaven to the impure ;—that its glories would be undistinguishable and its joys unperceived by them. Take, for example, the following :

"Moral natures must be like, in order to know each other. To the impure, the sensual, the selfish, the perception of the holy and pure is an impossibility: Amidst worldly and evil natures holiness isolates the good. Selfishness is a non-conductor of the divine. In the closest local proximity to the unholy, a pure and heavenly spirit is removed more widely beyond their range of vision than if oceans rolled between them. It preserves amidst them a divine incognito, and before the veil can be dropped, and the pure soul reveal its inner beauty to the morally defiled, the latter must needs undergo a complete renewal of nature, a transformation and discipline into kindred goodness. How much more,

without holiness, must it be impossible to see God! No external vision or revelation could disclose the Infinitely Holy to natures imperfect and sinful. They might be taken to heaven and stand before the everlasting throne, yet would the lustrous purity of its great Occupant be all dark and unapparent to them. Divine Being, in its wondrous manifestations, might play around the unrenewed mind, but it would be as a luminous atmosphere bathing blind eyes, or sweet music rippling round deaf ears; the heavenly effluence would not pass inwards, could make no thrill of appreciation, no sympathetic delight within the soul. There must, in short, be something God-like in us, before we can see and know God; we must be like Him before we can 'see Him as He is.' And into this Divine affinity—this penetrative moral insight—it is one great end of the Christian's life on earth to train him."

We trust this volume of sermons will soon be re-published in our country, when we intend to devote more space to it. From the extracts here given, we may expect to find its pages luminous with the truths of the New Dispensation. We rejoice that our English brethren are able to discern the merits of a religious work which does not profess to be of the New Church;—and that they can cheerfully acknowledge the truth it contains, without marring that acknowledgment by any uncharitable suspicion or accusation against the author.

Memoir of Theophilus Parsons, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, with notices of some of his contemporaries. By his son, THEOPHILUS PARSONS. Boston, 1859. Ticknor & Fields. pp. 476.—We have seldom read any biography with as much interest as this. Chief Justice Parsons was one of that army of noble men who seem to have been raised up by the Lord in the early days of our great Republic, to guide and shape its future destinies in the very wisest and most prudent manner. Looking back from the present epoch, we can see how much we are indebted to them, and every generous soul must thrill with pleasure in perusing the record of their labors. And it is particularly noteworthy in the case of Judge Parsons' that he not only devoted himself unselfishly and self-sacrificingly to the service of his country, but also took especial pains to avoid the applause and encomiums which his admiring fellow citizens were always willing and eager to bestow upon him. His son has therefore discharged a debt of justice no less than of filial piety, in arresting the tide of oblivion which, for this reason, might soon have rendered the memory of him indistinct in the minds of men, and in preserving in a permanent form those particulars of his life and character which might otherwise have been lost and forgotten.

Besides the life of Judge Parsons, the book contains a mass of histori-

cal information respecting the politics of his times, and the great men associated with him in public affairs, which will be interesting to all, and especially to the sons of Massachusetts. The literary execution and style of the work is fully worthy of its author; and to those who are familiar with his other writings, this is saying enough. We know of but few men whose English is so pure and elegant, or who clothe their thoughts in words of greater precision and clearness.

Social and Domestic Religion. In two volumes. Volume I. A Selection of Family Prayers and other Devotional Exercises, etc. New York. Published for the Proprietor. 1859.—The compiler of this work, we are told, is a New Churchman, and has had the needs and requirements of his brethren specially in view in preparing it. So far as its prayers and devotional exercises are concerned it strikes us very pleasantly. It presents a large collection of pious thoughts and religious musings, culled from the works of the most spiritually minded Christians of past times, and in language and style it is greatly superior to any professed New Church work of the kind that we have ever seen. And the Church is ripening into a state when such books are demanded by a very large class. The number of those who are less *intellectual* than *doctrinal* in their tastes, is increasing among us, and they require something more than mere dry statements of doctrinal truth for their spiritual edification. To such minds there is a great deal in this book that will be found interesting. Still, we are sorry to see that the compiler has marred the harmony of his work by the introduction of "A Brief Declaration" of his peculiar sentiments, which is entirely unnecessary to begin with, and as far as we can understand it, likely to offend many who would be much pleased with the rest of the book. When a man is writing not for instruction or controversy, but simply to give utterance to the religious sentiments of others, the introduction of matter which he knows expresses the opinion of only a small portion of those for whom his work is intended, is a palpable mistake. The *Children's Catechisms* on the other hand err in the opposite direction. They are adapted to all varieties of faith, and are consequently valuable to none. Nothing in them shows whether the child is to believe in a personal God or an impersonal one—the Lord Jesus Christ, or a diffused ether—New Church or no Church—and hence they are of use neither to a New Church nor an Old Church parent. If these two items could be expunged, we should have no hesitation in recommending the work most cordially.

The True and the Beautiful in Nature, Art, Morals and Religion Selected from the Works of John Ruskin, A. M. By Mrs. L. C. TUTHILL. New York. Wiley & Halsted. 1859. pp. 452.—In this Spring-time of the New Church, when the mighty vivifying influence of the New Jerusalem is coming down into every department of human thought, causing it to swell and break forth into a thousand budding manifestations of the new life at work within it, it would be strange if the fine arts did not show some marked signs of its presence. It is too soon as yet to look for anything more perhaps than the symptoms of this change; but there is still enough manifested to prove that the former things are passing away, and all things are being made new. Foremost among these signs of the times are the æsthetic criticisms of John Ruskin. He has attacked the false traditions of the past with a force and power that have seldom before been exhibited by any reformer; and in his manly efforts to restore the true standard of taste in Art, he has shown an appreciation of the first principles of things, which entitles him to a prominent place among the thinkers of the age. He has his faults and extravagances, to be sure; but his main positions are so self-evidently true, and his array of confirmatory facts so impregnable, that we imagine there are very few persons who would venture to oppose him *in toto*.

Mrs. Tuthill, in selecting from Mr. Ruskin's somewhat voluminous works, those passages which best convey his leading principles, or embody his most striking and effective criticisms on the various branches of the fine arts, has rendered a signal service both to those who are already familiar with his complete treatises and desire to revive their recollection of them, and to those who would, in a short compass, obtain a general idea of what has made so much stir in the literary world. Her selections show a thorough appreciation of the author, and a quick eye for the salient passages; and we know of no pleasanter book to have lying around for an occasional fifteen minutes perusal. It is, moreover, elegantly printed and bound and would make an admirable gift to any friend of cultivation and taste.

The New York Musical Review and Gazette, published fortnightly by Mason Brothers, is a periodical which all the lovers of music in our country, and all interested in the movements of the musical world, should not fail to receive regularly. It abounds in hints and information which cannot fail to interest all such. Terms—\$1 00 a year, or five copies for \$4 00.